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PHILIPPINE DAILY
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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Scout Ranger major axed over anti-GMA pamphlets

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

A COMMANDER of an elite Army unit has been sacked for calling for a change of government amid a vote-rigging scandal involving President Macapagal-Arroyo, a top military officer said yesterday.

Maj. Jason Aquino was relieved as opera-

SCOUT/ A17

Presiding CA justice takes Garci's Comelec post

BRAWNER

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday dropped her phone pal Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano with her appointment of Court of Appeals Presiding Justice Romeo A. Brawner.

PRESIDING/ A6

61% favor life without Gloria

THE FIRST DAY: The way it was on the day Virgilio Garcillano was welcomed by Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos to his new position on Feb. 12, 2004. PDI PHOTO

Pulse survey: There are better leaders

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Juliet Labog-Javellana

DEBUNKING Malacañang's claim that President Macapagal-Arroyo continues to enjoy public support, results of a survey by an independent polling firm show that more than half of Filipinos believe there are better leaders to replace Ms Arroyo.

"(A) sizable majority (61 percent) think that alternative scenarios serving the best interest of the country exclude President Arroyo remaining in office," Felipe Miranda, founding president of Pulse Asia Inc., said yesterday in a report titled "Filipinos at yet another crossroads of history."

An interesting finding from the survey was how the President's misery has led to "a remarkable political resurrection" for deposed President Joseph Estrada.

"The former President may already have about 40 percent of the public—a truly impressive multitude—ready to consider a leading role for him again in this nation's political drama. President Arroyo might well be former President Estrada's best resource in effecting his remarkable political resurrection," Miranda said.

The survey of 1,200 people across the country was taken on June 20-23—before Ms Arroyo's stunning admission she talked to an election commissioner during vote-counting for the May 2004 presidential election.

The survey found that 48 percent of the respondents believed that Ms Arroyo should not continue to serve as president.

Pulse Asia said half (49 percent) of the respondents "are of the opinion that President

61% FAVOR/ A17

STATELY welcome at the Palace: President Arroyo spreads out the red carpet for Poland's Prime Minister Marek Belka. Both heads of state witness the signing of agreements to expand the ties between the two countries and for a Polish firm to upgrade the PNR. *(Story on Page A2.)* EDWIN BACASMAS

Garcillano affidavit clears President; foes decry diversion

By Michael Lim Ubac and Philip C. Tubeza

FORMER Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano yesterday provided the INQUIRER with a copy of his affidavit denying that President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered him to rig last year's election.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero slammed Garcillino's statement as an attempt by Malacanang to deflect attention from the Chief Executive in the midst of calls for her resignation.

"It is very clear that this is an attempt to link the opposition to the tapes and distract us from President Arroyo, deflect the issue and focus it on the opposition," Escudero said yesterday.

The 68-year-old Garcillano spoke by telephone to the Inquirer on Tuesday to deny allegations resulting from a wiretapped telephone conversation that he had plotted with Ms Arroyo to fix the balloting.

The interview was arranged by an administration lawmaker, who requested that he not be named. Garcillano had previously denied vehemently his was the voice in

GARCILLANO/ A17

Garci's list 'purely black propaganda,' says Loren

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

ELECTION Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano's claim that he not only spoke with President Macapagal Arroyo but also with opposition candidates during last year's elections has drawn denials and clarifications from the people he had named.

In a telephone interview with the INQUIRER on Tuesday, Garcillano said the opposition candidates did not ask him for favors but simply expressed concern about possible fraud.

"It's purely black propaganda. I've not talked to Garcillano or to any Comelec (Commission on Election) official for that matter," Legarda told the INQUIRER.

"This political intrigue was expected because of my election protest against Vice President Noli de Castro," she said.

GARCI'S/ A17

Protestant churches want GMA to resign

By Christian V. Esguerra and DJ Yap

WHILE their Catholic counterparts seemed divided over the political crisis, leaders of the protestant National Council of Churches in the Philippines have made an unequivocal stand—President Macapagal-Arroyo must resign.

The group represents 13 million people belonging to mainly Protestant churches.

Accusations that Ms Arroyo's family received illegal gambling payoffs and that she cheated in the presidential election last year have plunged her administration into crisis, prompting calls for the President to resign.

Other groups like the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP)- Negros Oriental chapter, concerned faculty, professionals and staff of the Ateneo de Manila University and a students group *(See story on page A4)* at the Ateneo yesterday joined calls for Ms Arroyo to step down.

PROTESTANT A18

Mike A flies to US on voluntary exile

By Nikko Dizon

AFTER returning from Hong Kong four days ago, the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo finally left yesterday for the United States on voluntary exile to spare his embattled wife further political troubles.

First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, a lawyer accused of influence-peddling and receiving kickbacks from an illegal numbers racket, bid farewell to his daughter Luli, son Dato and granddaughter Eva Victoria at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

MIKE/ A6

AAAAY...
SA WAKAS!

THE TROUBLE with goodbye: Mr. Mike Arroyo is off again this time to the United States via Hong Kong. Seeing him off on Wednesday morning at the Naia are only daughter Luli and son Dato and granddaughter Eva Victoria. ROGER MARGALLO

Cory-Noli meeting: Mum is the word

By Cynthia D. Balana, Christian Esguerra, Juliet L. Javellana and TJ Burgonio

THE SPOKESPERSONS of Vice President Noli de Castro and former President Corazon Aquino "neither confirmed nor denied" the INQUIRER report on the supposed meeting today between their principals.

Lawyer Jessie Andres, De Castro's chief of staff and spokesperson, neither confirmed nor denied that Aquino, an icon of democracy, and Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales sought a meeting with De Castro the other day.

Lourdes "Deedee" Sytangco, spokesperson of Aquino, also said the former President would not comment on the report.

"We neither confirm nor deny that," Andres told the INQUIRER.

"Let's just say the Vice President is open to a meeting with any civic-minded leaders and political leaders to discuss solutions to the current political situation," Andres said.

De Castro, along with family members, left for Hong Kong yesterday to celebrate his 56th birthday.

The same report said that the meeting between De Castro, Aquino and Rosales would take place today. De Castro is sched

CORY-NOLI/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Central and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will have partly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY ERIKA A. SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/07/07/05

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONTPAGE

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‘DISCREDITED’ WATCHDOGS

Namfrel execs asked to quit

By TJ Burgonio

SENATE Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday pressed the National Movement for Free Elections to purge itself of its chair Jose Concepcion and secretary general Guillermo Luz for their alleged bias for President Macapagal-Arroyo in the close presidential race last year.

Unless it rids itself of the two "discredited officials," Namfrel should be barred from playing its watchdog role in the Aug. 8 elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Pimentel said.

"Namfrel should consider revamping its leadership. I am not hitting Namfrel as Namfrel. I am hitting the leadership of Namfrel, Joe Concepcion specifically and Bill Luz because they have shown by inevitable proof that they were favoring the administration," he said in a press briefing.

Pimentel claimed that Concepcion and Luz failed to act on a report of Namfrel provincial chair Hadji Abdullah Lacsasa Dalidig about the "rampant tampering" of certificates of canvass, statements of votes and election returns in Lanao del Sur.

This, he said, resulted in the shaving of votes for opposition presidential candidate, the late actor Fernando Poe Jr., and the padding of votes for Ms Arroyo.

CONCEPCION

LUZ

Pimentel went on to cite a study by Roberto Verzola, an IT expert who disclosed last week that massive cheating was carried out to give Ms Arroyo commanding lead in the May 2004 elections. Ms Arroyo led by 1.1 million votes.

Either Ms Arroyo won by 156,000 votes or Poe won by less than 84,000, he said in his study based on a comparison of the results of the Congress tally of the certificates of canvass and Namfrel's tally of the election returns.

The discrepancies in the Congress and Namfrel tallies showed that cheating affected 600,000 votes in Mindanao, according to Verzola.

Open endorsement

On top of this, Pimentel said that Concepcion-owned companies produced bottles of mineral water for the administration, which he said was an open endorsement of Ms Arroyo.

"And what is that a sign of if not complicity in the designs of the President to win the elections at all cost? And of course Bill Luz is of the same caliber as Joe," he said.

Pimentel said Namfrel could not perform its job credibly in the upcoming ARMM elections if Concepcion and Luz, who had been perceived as partial to the President, continued to head the group.

Bias

Their bias had imperiled the watchdog's credibility, he said.

Pimentel, however, stopped short of naming possible replacements for the pair, saying "I don't want it said that I am trying to meddle in the affairs of Namfrel. Let them choose that. Let them choose people who have good reputation and there are many in Namfrel who can do that."

COPW BULLETIN NO. 10

AN URGENT APPEAL TO OUR PRESIDENT, CONGRESS, AND OUR PEOPLE

To Congress, we appeal to your sense of statesmanship. Amend the Expanded Value Added Tax Law in 45 days. The E-VAT Law is defective in at least two aspects:

1. Under the CONSTITUTION, ONLY CONGRESS can raise taxes and, therefore, the power of the President to increase the VAT from 10% to 12% must be rescinded.
2. All TAX measures must emanate from the House of Representatives. Therefore, the increase of the Corporate Income Tax from 32% to 35% as proposed by the SENATE should be resolved by both the House and the Senate.

Mrs. President and dear members of Congress, the country is at its worst political and economic crisis in the last 50 years. While our Asian neighbors have leapfrogged in their economic growth, our economy has remained stagnant. Our per capita income has remained today at $1,000 - the same as it was in 1982.

There is a growing clamor from many of our people that the President has lost her mandate to govern effectively and lead our country. The President must make all the difficult decisions.

Time is running out and you have no choice but to STAMP OUT GRAFT AND CORRUPTION, SMUGGLING, TAX EVASION, INFLUENCE PEDDLING AND BRIBERY, WHICH WERE NOT ADEQUATELY ADDRESSED THE LAST 50 YEARS.

The only glimmer of hope is your team of Economic Managers headed by Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima who has shown his determination to stamp out graft and corruption. We appeal to them NOT to be discouraged by the political events and instead continue to pursue their campaign with greater intensity.

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Namfrel stands by election tally

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE NATIONAL Citizens' Movement for Free Elections is standing by the credibility of the results of 2004 election that it released on June 30, 2004, Namfrel secretary general Guillermo Luz said.

In an interview, Luz reiterated that Namfrel based its final tally on the election return sheets, called Document No. 6, of which both opposition and administration parties have copies.

Luz said these election return sheets were difficult to tamper because they were prepared in full view of teachers and watchers from both administration and opposition camps.

But he admitted that there could be "some limitations" in the results of Namfrel, composed of 183,000 election return sheets, or roughly 83 percent—not 86 percent, as earlier reported—of the more than 216,000 precincts nationwide.

"Namfrel holds and based its tally on the election tally result sheets. To establish a distinction between the election return sheets and the certificates of canvass, the Namfrel based its tally on the election return sheets," said Luz.

He noted that even the information technology expert Robert Verzola, who claimed last month that there was "massive cheating" in the 2004 elections to allegedly secure President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory, said that "Namfrel's tally [was] closer to the truth."

Luz said that Namfrel's mandate was to undertake the quick count based on election return sheets.

He said Namfrel came out with its report on the final tally on time and on schedule, which was on June 30, 2004.

Luz said Namfrel tallied the election return sheets as they came and released about 80 preliminary reports before its final report on June 30.

"All those results were all made public record," he said.

He noted that several times both administration and opposition parties questioned the election results and Namfrel had demanded that they support their claim with the proper documents.

"Remember, our document was Copy No. 6. of the the election tally sheets. Both the administration and the opposition parties have the same copies of these results, Copy No. 4 and No. 5. Comelec kept copies Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 7," he said.

He explained that copy No. 1 and No. 2 went to the board of canvassers, while No. 7 stayed in the box in case there were protests and recounting would be required.

"We refer to this as the escrow copy," said Luz.

He said that if complaints persisted, the opposition and administration parties could go back to the records in their possession.

Luz also reiterated that there have been no resignations from either board members and officers of Namfrel.

GMA hosts Polish PM

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and visiting Prime Minister Marek Belka of Poland oversaw yesterday the signing of agreements to expand ties between the two countries and for a Polish firm to upgrade a railway system here.

Belka arrived yesterday at around 12:50 p.m. at the Villamor Airbase in Pasay City for a two-day visit in the Philippines. Accompanied by his wife Krystyna, Belka was welcomed by Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Jose Reyes.

Belka is the first head of government among the 10 new European Union member countries to visit the Philippines.

The prime minister is scheduled to leave today at 6 p.m.

Ms Arroyo and Belka witnessed the signing of an agreement between the heads of Poland's BUMAR Group Co. Ltd. and the state-run Philippine National Railways about the upgrading of a railway line on Luzon island.

BUMAR is to prepare a feasibility study and "endeavor to provide project financing" for the planned work, officials said.

BELKA

The foreign ministries of the two countries also signed an agreement, pledging to hold political consultations every two years to identify ways to improve relations between their countries.

Bilateral trade stood at $14.75 million in 2004, the Philippine government said.

While there is virtually no Polish investment in the Philippines, a Philippine port-handling company, International Container Terminal Services Inc., invested $100 million dollars in the Polish port city of Gdynia in 2003.

Nikko Dizon, AFP

POLL PROTESTS

Noli's counter dilatory – Loren

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER senator Loren Legarda, who lost in the vice presidential elections in 2004, yesterday accused the lawyers of Vice President Noli de Castro of trying to derail her election protest by also filing a counter-protest against her before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal.

Legarda said the move of De Castro's lawyer, Romulo Macalintal, to also question her lead in other provinces was a "dilatory" tactic.

She noted how the move of the De Castro camp came shortly after she posted at least P4 million with the PET to fund a recount of ballots and the re-tabulation and re-computation of the 2004 election returns and certificates of canvass for the vice presidency.

Partial bond

The partial cash bond was for the recount of ballots and the recomputation and revision of ERs and the COCs in the provinces of Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Surigao del Sur and Cebu.

Legarda asked the court for a speedy resolution of her protest, noting that with the growing clamor for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo amid charges of election-rigging, the issue of presidential succession has been pushed into the forefront.

Legarda and Fernando Poe Jr., Ms Arroyo's closest rival, filed election protests against the President and De Castro, claiming fraud and cheating. Poe's protest was dismissed after he died last December.

"The question of succession has become critical and immediate because a great number of our people question the qualifications of De Castro to assume the presidency, aside from the issue affecting the legitimacy of his election," Legarda said.

Rufus Rodriguez, Legarda's counsel, said it would take about six months to finish the re-counting of votes in the pilot provinces.

But Macalintal said giving a timetable was putting undue pressure on the PET, which is composed of all the justices of the Supreme Court.

'Bogus protest'

He said Legarda's lawyers were trying to project their client as having won the election should the results of the recount in the pilot provinces prove favorable to her.

"If this happens, it would only show that there's a basis for the PET to also order the opening of ballot boxes in other places identified by Legarda in her protest. They should stop deceiving the people that it would mean that Legarda indeed won," Macalintal said.

The lawyer said Legarda's lawyers should not picture their client as the only victim in this issue.

"Even the Vice President is a victim. He did not cheat, yet he has to spend money to answer Legarda's protest," Macalintal said.

He said Legarda's "bogus protest" would hurt De Castro financially as the Vice President would have to spend more than P450,000 a month to pay for the revisors and documentation.

He said each of the 30 revisors would cost his client P700 a day while the five supervising revisors would be paid P1,500 a day.

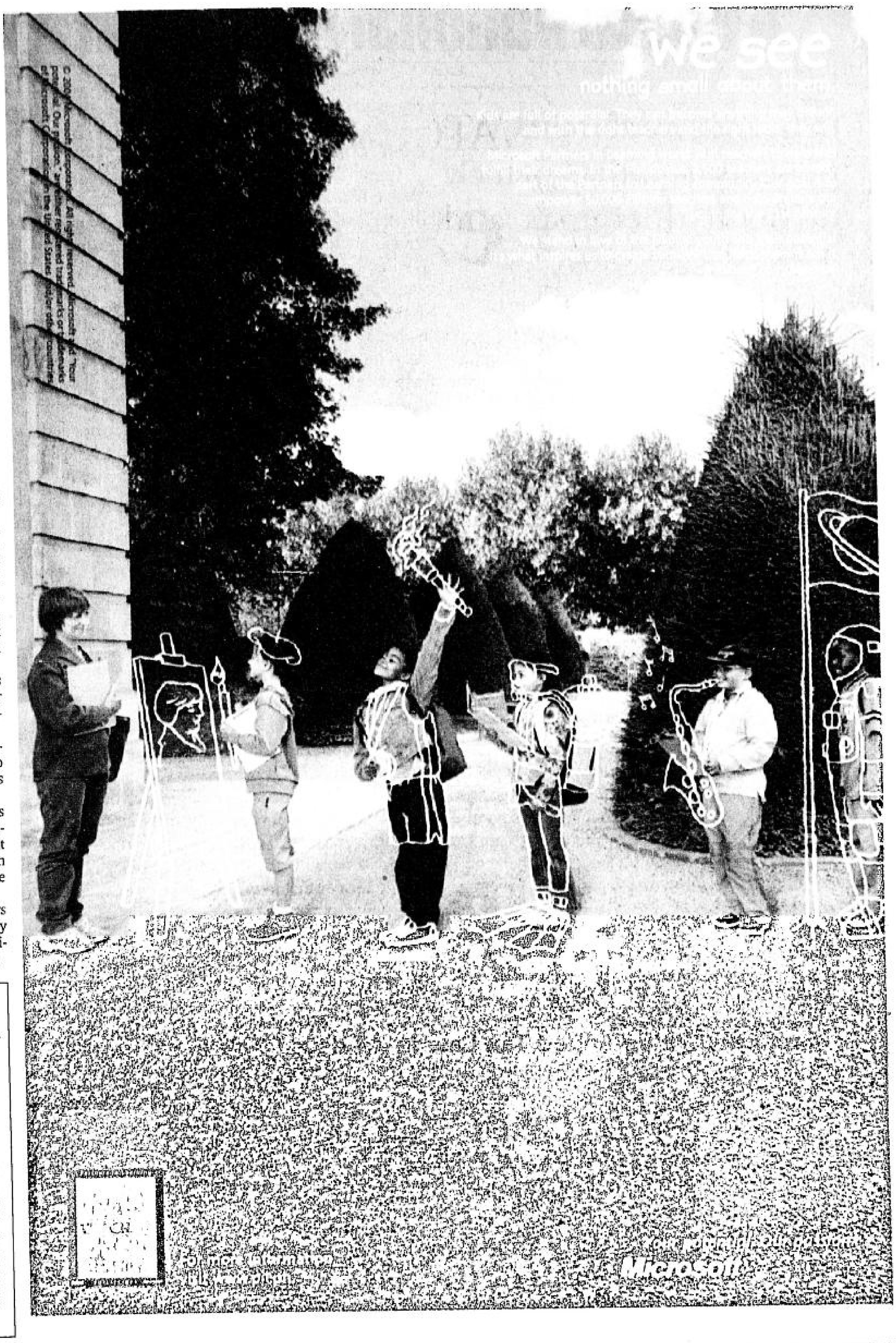
Appeal for type AB blood

THE FAMILY of Ernesto J. Garcia appeals for five

kind-hearted blood donors who have the rare type AB blood. Ernesto is scheduled to undergo a heart bypass operation this Tuesday morning at the Asian Hospital in Alabang.

Prospective donors may please contact Mrs. Rose Garcia at 0917-6203750 or 0917-6311483. Or donors may go this weekend directly to the Asian Hospital Blood Bank (look for Dulce), 3rd Floor Asian Hospital, 2205 Civic Drive, Fil-Invest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. The Blood Bank is open daily from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., including Sunday, with telephone number: 771-9000 local 8355 or 8356.

Donors should please mention to the Blood Bank: the patient's full name, Ernesto J. Garcia, and the date of the heart bypass operation, Tuesday, July 12. The patient Ernesto, is the uncle of Jesuit priest/composer Father Manoling Francisco, SJ, and Phil. Inquirer staffer Mylene Francisco.



3 more alternate justices named to Erap plunder trial

By Armand N. Nocum

THREE more alternate members were named yesterday by the Supreme Court to the special panel trying the plunder and perjury charges against deposed President Joseph Estrada in a fresh bid to speed up the resolution of the four-year-old case with the Sandiganbayan.

In a resolution dated June 28, 2005, but was only released to the media yesterday, the high court said the move was intended "to prevent delays in the proceedings."

Named new alternate members were Associate Justices Godofredo Legaspi, Maria Cristina Cortez Estrada and Norberto Geraldez.

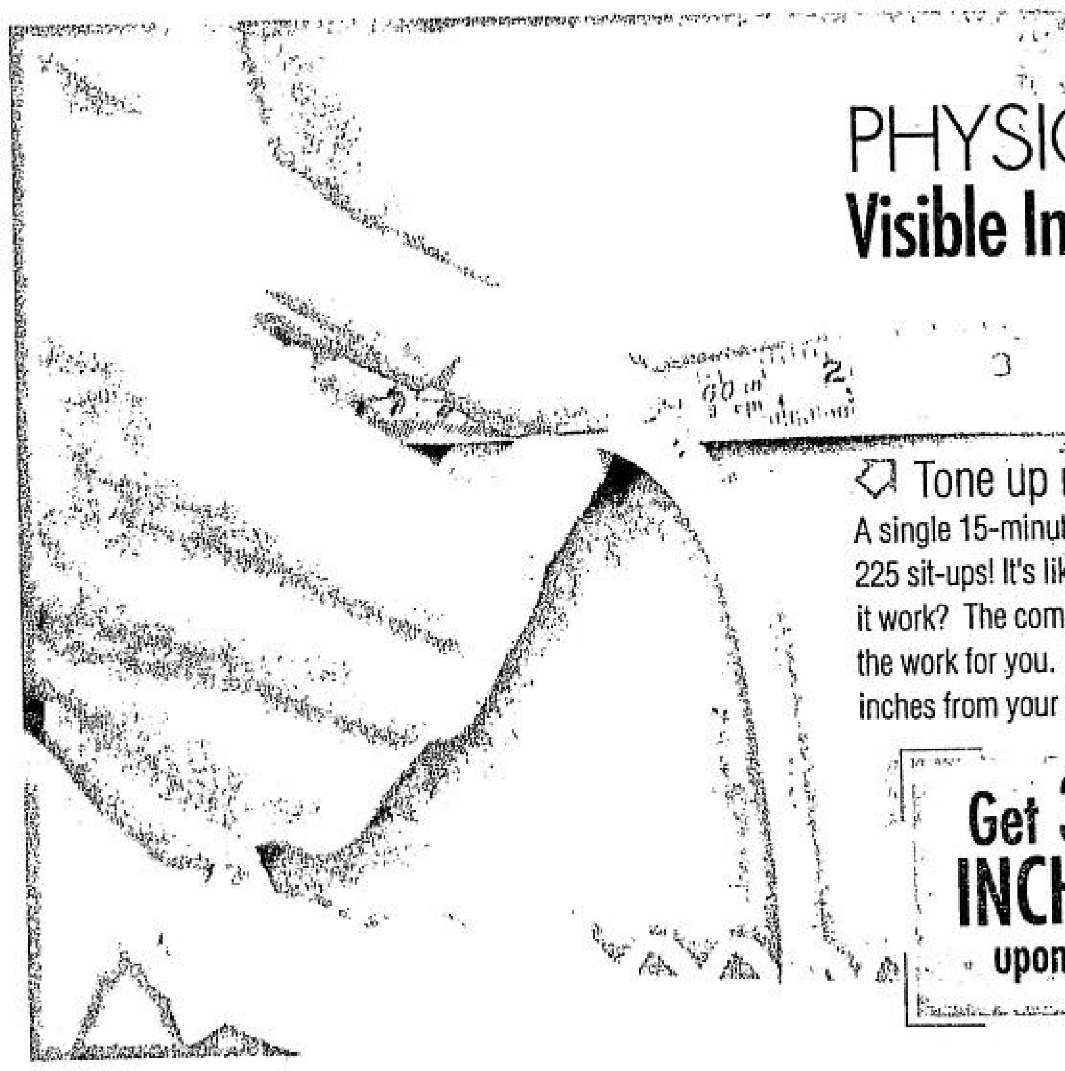
They will sit in the hearing of the special division in case designated alternate member Associate Justice Rodolfo Ponferrada or regular members of the three-man panel are absent.

The panel is presently composed of Presiding Justice Teresita Leonardo de Castro, who chairs the special division, and Associate Justices Francisco Villaruz Jr. and Diosdado Peralta as regular members. *(Related story on Page A5)*

The decision stemmed from the request by the prosecution led by Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio for the high court to either authorize the Sandiganbayan presiding justice to appoint and designate alternate members in the special division or for the high court to do so.

Villa-Ignacio said there were instances when the proceedings of the special division were suspended because regular members or alternate members were absent.

But more than the absences, the prosecution lamented that the alleged dilatory tactics of the defense panel had delayed the resolution of the cases against Estrada, who is accused of amassing P4 billion worth of ill-gotten wealth while in power.



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A Call to National Healing in a Time of Crisis

The crisis we currently face presents us with extremely difficult dilemmas and choices as a people.

We believe that the President should be made personally accountable for her actions, particularly as the country's highest official on whom the people place so much of their trust. But we also recognize that the charges against her point to much deeper problems in our electoral process, political structure and cultural system of which she is only one, albeit a central part.

We see the need to defend and strengthen our very fragile institutions, especially our constitutional system and the rule of law. But we also recognize that part of their present crisis of legitimacy comes from their unresponsiveness to the majority and the crying need for fundamental institutional transformation.

We realize that the country needs precious breathing space from political turmoil and division which prevent the government from addressing the urgent concerns of the poorest, and from pursuing its various reform programs. But we also know that a government cannot simply "move on with the business of governing" without moral legitimacy and authority to rule.

We know that the present crisis requires swift and decisive action lest it lead to a prolonged stalemate that could in the end bring about greater polarization and violence. But we also discern that our cultural divisions and social wounds run very deep, and bringing about unity, healing and renewed hope will require much time, dedicated action, personal sacrifice and profound conversion.

We, concerned faculty, professionals and staff of the Ateneo de Manila University call on the President to begin the process of healing by paving the way for an orderly political transition within the framework of the Constitution. We appeal to the generosity of spirit she expressed in her December 30, 2002 speech, when after deep discernment she said that she would be an instrument of unity and reform rather than of division. We pray that she would set the example of the kind of humility and self-sacrifice needed to confront our national crisis, by voluntarily giving up power. The crisis of authority we face today goes beyond the "Garci tapes" and the charges of electoral fraud. There is a fundamental crisis of trust which we fear threatens not only the President herself but a whole range of our institutions. We call on her to make this personal sacrifice in order to defend the institution of the presidency and our fragile democracy. We ask her to step down.

Because we believe that our problems do not come solely from the President, and thus cannot be solved by a mere change of personalities, we also call for a formal process of "truth telling" through the setting up of an independent Truth, Reform and Reconciliation Commission along the South African model. The mandate of this commission will no longer be primarily the investigation of the "Garci issue" although it may form part of the agenda to bring into the open the nature of our electoral system. The process will be political rather than judicial. The objective is not to pinpoint the legal culpability of individuals, especially of witnesses, who will be protected from self-incrimination. The aim is to uncover our deep wounds of social resentment, division, oppression and injustice as a people, in the hope that by exposing them, we can begin a process of cleansing and healing in our society. Part of the task of the commission will be to identify areas of reform that can be addressed at various levels and through different mechanisms.

But in order to rebuild trust and renew hope in our people, especially among those who are always the most severely affected by crises, there is a need to effect immediately governance reforms aimed at addressing urgent issues such as corruption, lack of transparency and efficiency in the delivery of services, tax evasion, and poor education, housing and health services.

It is also imperative that the COMELEC be revamped. We join the call for the COMELEC chair and commissioners to resign as a crucial step towards wider electoral reforms.

Finally, the process of constitutional reform should also be worked out in the political transition, so that there are clear mechanisms for a Constitutional Convention that will revise the charter, rework the country's political institutions and provide for democratic elections under this new framework.

It is clear that we all need to be personally accountable for the immense and seemingly insurmountable problems plaguing our country. Solving our national crisis demands that we transcend our frustrations, disillusionment and cynicism, and summon our inner strengths as a people to become politically involved. In making these radical proposals, we are putting our hope and trust in the deep reserve of human dignity, goodness, energy and wisdom in our society that will allow us, with God's grace, to reimagine and rebuild our national community.

Concerned Faculty, Professionals and Staff of the Ateneo de Manila University

Anne Candelaria, Ateneo Center for Educational Development
Alnard Alejandro Pagulayan, Ateneo Center for Educational Development
Isabelle S. Eleosida, Ateneo Center for Educational Development
Emilyn Castillo, ACESS
Ma. Aurora Bulatao, ACESS
Gina Ylaya, ACESS
Pauline A. Elipane, ACESS
Lilibeth Lim, ACESS
Rene Salvador San Andres, Associate Dean for Student Affairs
Caroline Natividad, ADSA Office
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Deanna Lijauco, Ateneo School of Government
Dondon Parafina, Ateneo School of Government
Roy Choco, Ateneo School of Government
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Denise Margaret S. Matias, Biology Department
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Charlotte Natividad, Campus Ministry
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Benito Lim, Chinese Studies Program
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Daisy C. See, Chinese Studies Program
Song Bee Dy, Chinese Studies Program
Richie S. De Guzman, Chinese Studies Program
Ramil Allan Perez, Center for Community Services
Corazon S. Labe, Center for Community Services
Aminan Perez, Center for Social Policy
Jovita Balaguer, Center for Social Policy
Tom M. Sawyer, Center for Social Policy
Jennifer de Castro Aguirre, Center for Social Policy
Azonme Abello, Center for Social Policy
Perfecto N. Potestades II, Center for Social Policy
Godelia E.S. Ricalde, Center for Social Policy
Ma. Fgora May M. Cerna, Center for Social Policy
Leslie Flores, Center for Social Policy
Naaz Perez, Center for Social Policy
Leovino Ma. Garcia, Dean, School of Humanities
Leland Joseph R. de la Cruz, Development Studies Program
Jose Estuar, Development Studies Program
Brenda S. Batistiana, Development Studies Program
Jerome L. Montemayor, Development Studies Program
Melissa C. Mar, Development Studies Program
Christine Amarra, DISCS
Eric Vidal, DISCS
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Leonardo A. Lanzona, Jr., Economics Department
Luis F. Dumlao, Economics Department
Cristina M. Bautista, Economics Department
Malou P. De Guzman, Economics Department
Philip Tuaño, Economics Department
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Germelino Bautista, Economics Department/IPC
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Julie Rose Bagasbas, Office of Student Affairs
Ma. Agnes Alimbog, Office for Social Concern and Involvement
Ophalie Alzona , Office for Social Concern and Involvement
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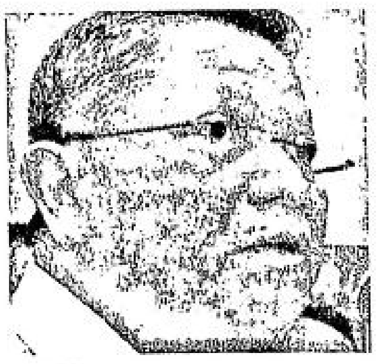
Erap defense calls Reyes, Mendoza, Ebdane to stand

By Nelson F. Flores



REYES

MENDOZA

EBDANE

RANKING police and military officers who played key roles in the ouster of former President Joseph Estrada failed yesterday to testify at the multimillion-peso plunder trial of the deposed leader in the Sandiganbayan.

Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane were called by the defense to explain their participation in Edsa 2 that booted Estrada out of office in 2001.

Rene Saguisag, counsel for Estrada, said he would ask the witnesses, along with other police and military officers, to confirm if they were members of the "five groups who offered their support from January to November 2000 in plotting with the Arroyos and Mr. Luis Singson to oust a duly-elected president."

He further said the ouster of Estrada resulted in his "premature supposed loss of immunity in 2001, which explains why he is here now, as shockingly revealed by Ms. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who, while a member of the Cabinet of the principally accused was even then conspiring to oust him."

Reyes was the Armed Forces chief then, while Ebdane and Mendoza were ranking Philippine National Police officials during the Estrada administration.

Reyes' lawyer told the court that his client had a prior engagement, and Mendoza's counsel said they would file a motion to quash the subpoena. Ebdane, on the other hand, said he received the court summon only last Tuesday, but was willing to be appear if called.

Saguisag also said they would present Senior Supt. Rodolfo Azurin of the the PNP Traffic Management Group to belie Singson's claims that traffic personnel tried to kill him sometime in Oct. 2000 along San Marcelino Street in Ermita, Manila. He added that they would also file a motion seeking to reenact the whole incident.

The court also subpoenaed several military generals but their names were not listed in the Armed Forces general roster either because they were no longer in the active service or their names were misspelled and could not be located, according to a representative sent by the Armed Forces Judge Advocate General's Office.

Earlier, the defense panel also tried to present First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo in the witness stand but failed in their initial attempt.

Arroyo's lawyer said they would file a motion to quash the subpoena issued by the court on grounds that the First Gentleman's testimony would be irrelevant.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said he could not understand why the defense panel refused to present Estrada whom he said was the most significant witness of them all.

"Why are they insisting to present witnesses whose testimony is irrelevant to the charges being faced by Estrada?" Villa-Ignacio asked.

Estrada is facing plunder, an offense punishable with death, and perjury charges filed by the government before the anti-graft court in connection with allegations that he received millions of payoffs from "jueteng" operators and kickbacks from tobacco excise taxes.

DOJ: Nothing to restrain in Ong probe

THE JUSTICE department yesterday declared "moot and academic" a petition by Samuel Ong, the former National Bureau of Investigation official who claimed to have the master copy of the controversial "Gloriagate" tape, to stop the department from conducting a preliminary investigation into the inciting to sedition charge filed against Ong by the NBI.

John Madamba, a lawyer from the Office of the Solicitor General, said the petition was "an exercise in futility because there was nothing to enjoin anymore" as the Department of Justice had already filed the complaint with the Makati Metropolitan Trial Court.

It was the Makati court that now had jurisdiction to entertain "any questions of irregularity in the conduct of the investigation," Madamba told reporters after the hearing yesterday on Ong's petition.

"For us, there is no reason for this hearing. There is due process, they [Ong and his lawyers] had the opportunity to ask for an investigation. They can also move to inhibit chief state prosecutor Jovencito Zuño if they believe there is manifest bias or partiality in the conduct of the preliminary investigation," Madamba said.

According to state prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, Ong was being charged with sedition for allegedly making statements blaming President Macapagal-Arroyo for the corruption and grave poverty facing the country.

Velasco said Ong, in conspiracy with others, was trying to incite the people to rise up against the President of the Republic.

But Ong's lawyer Jaime Maria Flores said Ong's statements were "protected speech. Any person can say that, I will say that."

In his petition, Ong said Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and DOJ officials should be stopped from looking into the complaint against him as he claimed Gonzalez had already prejudged the case.

Flores said the complaint of inciting to sedition should be quashed and the hearing for Ong's petition allowed to continue.

The court gave both parties five days to submit their legal arguments. *Tina G. Santos*

Coming soon: Husk-fueled power plant

By Volt Contreras

AN IDEA whose time has come in a land of "nuts."

A Ukrainian energy company is set to build "revolutionary power plants" in the Philippines that will be fueled by coconut husks, the Department of Foreign Affairs reported yesterday.

The DFA said Sukhin Energy Inc. has forged an agreement with the Philippine National Oil Co. to install a 2.5-megawatt synthesized gas station in Masbate, an environment-friendly power source for the island province's 600,000 inhabitants.

The $7-million plant is considered the pilot project of the SEI-PNOC joint venture which will be covering other parts of the country, the department added.

The Masbate station will house some 320 tons of equipment to be shipped by end of this month and will require two more months to assemble. It is expected to reach full production capacity by October this year.

The technology was developed by Ukrainian scientist and SEI President Yevgeny Sukhin, who unveiled his invention only last month through a demonstration "using 20 tons of coconut husks shipped from the Philippines," it said.

The demo was then witnessed by a visiting Philippine congressional delegation led by House Speaker Jose de Venecia, at the Klavdievo Experimental Plant just outside the Ukrainian capital of Kiev.

Philippine Ambassador to Moscow Ernesto Llamas, who also covered Ukraine, said the SEI plants will not only reduce local dependence on fossil fuels but also use up waste products churned out abundantly in the country.

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Mike A flies to US on voluntary exile

From page A1

Shortly before noon, Arroyo boarded Cathay Pacific Flight CX 900 to Hong Kong where the First Gentleman, according to airport sources, planned to take a connecting flight to San Francisco, a favorite vacation area of the First Family.

Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, the President's elder son who has also been accused of accepting "jueteng" payoffs, and his family were scheduled to leave late last night for San Francisco aboard Philippine Airlines Flight No. PR 104.

The Pampanga lawmaker earlier took a leave of absence from the House of Representatives after a witness testified at a congressional hearing that she personally delivered P500,000 in jueteng money to him at the session hall. He has denied the charges.

Feels bad, sad

The First Gentleman's lawyer, Jesus Santos, said his client was "sad."

"He wants to leave so that the President can do her work. He feels bad. He is saddened by reports that are erroneous," Santos told reporters in Filipino after the First Gentleman boarded his flight.

Unlike during the First Gentleman's recent trip to Hong Kong, photographers and television crews were allowed yesterday into the Naia east concourse to cover his departure. Arroyo declined to answer reporters' questions and just smiled and waved to the media.

Outside the lounge reserved for dignitaries, Arroyo peppered his granddaughter with kisses as she was held by Dato. Luli held his father's hands as they walked toward Gate 7. Before entering the tube, Arroyo hugged his granddaughter and said goodbye to a coterie of airport officials.

Santos stressed that Ms Arroyo's husband was not being exiled.

Not expelled

"To say that he went on exile is wrong. Look at the definition of the word in the dictionary. It means being expelled from one's country by the authorities. He has not been expelled. Instead, he went on his own volition," Santos said.

The President earlier said that her husband had volunteered to leave the Philippines and that she was making a personal sacrifice to show her commitment to the nation.

Mike Arroyo had been thought to be starting his self-exile last week when he flew to Hong Kong, but he returned to Manila on Sunday after receiving summons from the Sandiganbayan to testify as a hostile witness at the plunder trial of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Santos later convinced the antigraft court not to summon the First Gentleman at this time.

The President's brother-in-law, Negros Occidential Rep. Iggy Arroyo, is also accused of receiving jueteng payoffs, but he has refused to take a leave of absence from the House.

Tax evasion

The Department of Finance is preparing tax evasion charges against Iggy Arroyo. Up to now, however, no such case has been filed against him.

Accusations against the President's husband, son and brother-in-law are swirling at a time when Ms Arroyo herself is facing allegations of electoral fraud. She has admitted talking to an election official during the bitterly contested May 2004 presidential election, but denied influencing the outcome.

Ms Arroyo has said she won't resign despite opposition street protests. On Tuesday, she said she was willing to face an impeachment trial to prove she didn't cheat. *With reports from AP and AFP*

Nolcom chief quits post 4 months to retirement

THE HEAD of the military's Northern Luzon Command yesterday confirmed reports that he had resigned from his post as early as June 16, more than four months ahead of his retirement on Oct. 31.

But Lt. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, 55, said his decision had nothing to do with the current political turmoil or with allegations that his operations chief and chief of staff, Col. Gregorio Pio Catapang, was behind a plot to overthrow President Macapagal-Arroyo and install Vice President Noli de Castro.

"I just wanted to enjoy my retirement soon," Dominguez told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview. "I want to set aside more time for my family," he added.

Catapang, who had been cleared of allegations that he was involved in an antigovernment plot, also tendered a courtesy resignation from his post effective July 15. He said he expected to be reassigned in the Visayas or in Mindanao next month.

A member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1971, Dominguez has consistently been among the top contenders for the post of Armed Forces chief of staff since 2003.

He was promoted to a star-rank by then President Joseph Estrada in January 1999. Ms Arroyo promoted him to major general in December 2001 despite the infamous Lamitan incident in June that year.

For that botched operation which saw cornered Abu Sayyaf members escape from surrounding military troops, Dominguez faced a congressional inquiry into allegations of connivance between the military and the bandits.

He was promoted to lieutenant general in July 2003.

Dominguez said his resignation would take effect on July 15, coinciding with the turnover of command in Nolcom. He will be replaced by Maj. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division based in Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija.

Dominguez, who has been holding the Nolcom post since 2003, spoke of the change of command and his early turnover of the post in a press briefing on Tuesday at Nolcom headquarters in Tarlac City. He, however, did not mention his resignation.

Dominguez led an aggressive campaign against insurgents while involving soldiers in civic operations to win the trust of communities in Northern and Central Luzon. *Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Cory-Noli meeting: Mum is the word

From page A1

uled to return to the country today.

Peachy Yamsuan, communications director of the Archdiocese of Manila, said her office had no information that Rosales was seeking to meet with De Castro.

An INQUIRER source claimed the meeting was set today in an undisclosed location and was meant to check if the Vice President, an immensely popular former broadcaster, has "what it takes to lead this country."

Attending retreat

Rosales could not be reached for comment as he was attending the annual retreat of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines at the Pope Pius XII Catholic Center in Manila.

The retreat is the penultimate activity before the bishops convene at the 91st plenary assembly starting tomorrow until Sunday to choose the next CBCP president and draft a unified and definitive position on the political crisis centered on President Macapagal-Arroyo.

'Un-Rosales'

Fr. Anton Pascual, Caritas Manila executive director and head of the Network of Social Action Centers in Metro Manila's dioceses, yesterday said Rosales would never seek such a meeting like the one claimed by the Inquirer source.

A Church insider told the Inquirer that it was not in the archbishop's "character" to initiate a meeting with a politician. "He is usually careful around politicians."

If there was indeed a meeting, it was likely that Rosales had merely been invited to join, the source said.

To show up in the supposed meeting with De Castro would also be "un-Rosales," considering his intense devotion to Church activities, he said.

"When he's in a retreat or in any religious activity, you cannot disturb him," he said. "These things are very important to him. He's always there at the appointed time. He usually stays in the place and doesn't leave until the activity is finished."

Come home

Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday criticized De Castro for opting to leave the country to celebrate his birthday during these "abnormal (political) times."

At this critical time when some sectors are looking at him as a possible leader, he goes abroad to celebrate his birthday. It doesn't speak well of a leader. He should come home immediately," Lacson said.

Lacson pointed out that supposed "kingmakers" were seeking an audience with De Castro but the constitutional successor chose to be away for a birthday celebration.

Aquino and Rosales were seeking a meeting with De Castro to discuss the clamor for President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation and possibly the rule of succession.

Divided on De Castro

Lacson admitted that the opposition, which is united in calling for Ms Arroyo's resignation, was divided on De Castro as the constitutional successor.

But Lacson said he was willing to support the succession of De Castro because he favored the constitutional process.

"There's nothing we can do because he is the successor," Lacson told the INQUIRER.

He said De Castro should be given the benefit of the doubt because there was still no evidence that his votes were obtained through fraudulent means.

Lacson also said De Castro's capability should not be prejudged because he had not yet served in a public position.

De Castro made a name as an ABS-CBN talent and won a seat in the Senate before resigning to run for vice president.

But Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva and other opposition leaders have called for De Castro's resignation because his election was also supposedly fraudulent.

Pimentel made light of the scheduled meeting between Aquino, Rosales and De Castro today, saying it was not unexpected.

"That's good. Even nonkingmakers are entitled to talk with him, and even you," he said, addressing reporters.

While maintaining that Ms Arroyo and De Castro should resign, Pimentel yesterday said that he was still open to the idea of De Castro assuming the presidency if President Arroyo stepped down.

'X-factor'

Pimentel declared that between the President and Vice President, he preferred De Castro to run the country's affairs to Ms Arroyo who is dogged by allegations of electoral fraud and corruption.

"Let me put it this way. In between a known crook and an X factor, I'd always go for the X factor," he said when asked at a press briefing if De Castro was capable of turning the country around in case he takes over the presidency.

"Why will this nation, for example, continue having a President who has so many scandals left and right snapping at her heels in Malacañang involving immediate members of her family, [and] telling lies about it...?"

No choice

Pimentel, however, clarified that he had no choice but to recognize De Castro as president in the event of an Arroyo resignation, he being the President's constitutional successor.

Pimentel maintained that a resignation by Ms Arroyo and De Castro to pave the way for a snap election remained the most "ideal, feasible and peaceful solution" to the crisis confronting the President.

"Noli should seek a new mandate to become the new President of this country rather than just succeed to the presidency after Gloria shall have been deposed," he added.

The senator was the first to call for the resignation of Ms Arroyo and De Castro, saying that they both hugely benefited from the massive electoral fraud in last year's presidential elections.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan took up the cudgels for De Castro, his former colleague at the Senate and fellow member of the chamber's so-called Wednesday Group.

Respect Constitution

"We must respect the Constitution and we should not interpret it selectively or in a manner that suits our biases and prejudices," Pangilinan said, in reaction to statements that De Castro was unfit for the presidency.

"He is the constitutional successor whether we like it or not and if he is called upon to assume the Office of the President, we must as citizens allow him the chance to lead our nation by virtue of the Constitution."

No evidence

As to allegations that he benefited from cheating in last year's elections, Pangilinan said there was no evidence showing that De Castro "participated in electoral fraud."

But Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago reminded De Castro's supporters that Ms Arroyo was not resigning and therefore there was no way for him to succeed except if Ms Arroyo were removed by impeachment.

"Both De Castro and his backers should bear in mind that once the President is unconstitutionally removed, he cannot assume the presidency," Santiago said.

Reacting to results of a Social Weather Station survey showing that 30 percent of those polled believed that De Castro should be the next president, Pimentel said the issue of who should succeed Ms Arroyo was not the issue at hand.

AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR PRESIDENT

July 7, 2005

Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal – Arroyo
President, Republic of the Philippines

Dear Madame President,

With deep concern and after prayerful reflection, we write this letter to you as our President and friend. You have been a hardworking President all these years and we have seen your resolve in addressing the fundamental issues of peace and poverty in our country. Such efforts will be remembered in history.

Our people placed their trust and pinned their hopes on you when you took over as President. The political situation prior to your succession required a leadership of transparency and accountability. We are saddened that recent events have put in serious question the credibility of the highest Office of the Land. We agonized over the turn of events leading towards your public apology to the nation, and we commend you for this admirable act of courage.

The seriousness of the allegation levelled against the highest Official of the Land has struck the moral fiber of our people and divided our nation. After a period of discernment over your public apology which we sincerely accept, it pains us to admit that despite your competence, your admission of a "lapse in judgment" has caused irreparable damage to your personal credibility and ability to govern effectively in the next five years. We are deeply concerned about a scenario where extremist groups will exploit our volatile political situation and resort to violence and other extra-constitutional means to wrest power. Because of this, our country and our people, especially the poor, will suffer most.

We pray, Madame President, that you lead us out of this political and moral crisis by making the supreme sacrifice for God and country to voluntarily relinquish the Presidency and allow the constitutional process of succession to proceed. This singular act shall be your legacy to future generations who will look back with gratitude and value your example of selfless statesmanship.

While it is true that your unprecedented act would raise some valid apprehensions regarding how the country would then proceed in terms of governance, we are confident in the thought that the constitutional processes founded on our democratic form of government will work, even under the most trying of circumstances.

As we ask you, Madame President, to make this supreme sacrifice, **we reject any form of extra-constitutional means, such as violent usurpation of power and any disregard for the rule of law, which will undermine our democratic principles.** In turn, we appeal to our Filipino brothers and sisters of varied political, ideological, and religious persuasions to respect and ensure a humane and nonviolent transition in government for us to effect the necessary and fundamental reforms that will move our country forward. As learning institutions imbued with the Lasallian mission of teaching minds, touching hearts, and transforming lives, we reiterate our commitment through our ministry in education to pursue the social and moral transformation of our people.

We pray to the Holy Spirit through the Intercession of Our Blessed Mother, to be your Guide in this critical moment where your discernment and response will determine the fate of our nation.

Receive our fraternal blessings with esteem and appreciation.

BR. DENNIS MAGBANUA, FSC
PRINCIPAL, ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL-LA SALLE
DIRECTOR, LA SALLE BROTHERS COMMUNITY
BACOLOD CITY

BR. GUS BOQUER, FSC
PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITY OF ST. LA SALLE
BACOLOD CITY

Presiding CA justice takes . . .

From page A1

In a speech during a barangay consultative assembly in Manila the President said: "I will give you a scoop. Of course, for candidates like you, the Comelec is important. I want to announce to you that I have asked the Presiding Justice of the Court of Appeals, Justice Brawner, to be the next Comelec commissioner."

The President did not state who Brawner would replace but Malacañang later confirmed that he would take the place of Garcillano who was not reappointed.

The President did not mention the fate of her other Comelec appointee, Commissioner Manuel Barcelona, who like Garcillano had been bypassed twice by the Commission on Appointments.

Brother of general

Brawner, 69, will assume his Comelec post on his birthday and date of retirement from the bench on Sept.17. His appointment to the Comelec came just seven months since the President named Brawner to his current post as the presiding judge of the Court of Appeals.

His brother, retired Brig. Gen. Felix Brawner Jr., is a classmate of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita at the Philippine Military Academy Class 1957. Associate Justice Brawner is also a classmate of Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide.

Brawner chaired the 12th Division of the Court of Appeals which heard the case of the Oakwood mutineers in 2003.

A graduate of the University of the Philippines College of Law, Brawner is from the Gaddang Tribe in Nueva Vizcaya. He had served the bulk of his career in Baguio City—11 years as a prosecutor and 20 years a judge. In 1977, the Baguio Press Club cited him Judge of the Year.

Awards

He was appointed justice of the Court of Appeals in 1995, the same year he obtained the Chief Justice Jose P. Laurel Award for Judicial Excellence as Outstanding Regional Trial Court Judge given by the Foundation for Judicial Excellence and the Best Decision Award in Civil Law given by the Chief Justice Fred Ruiz Castro Memorabilia Commission.

Celebrated case

Brawner also received a commendation from then President Fidel Ramos for his decision on the conviction of the celebrated Myrna Diones case.

Correction

IN THE article "Blending Islam with mainstream subjects," which came out in the July 3 issue (Page A14), BEAM was erroneously referred to as Basic Education Assistance for Muslims. BEAM stands for Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao and is a project supported by the governments of the Philippines and Australia to facilitate access to and improve the quality of basic education in southern and central Mindanao (Regions XI, XII and ARMM).

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses: glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Int'l group of volunteers defies travel warnings, heads South

BRAVING travel warnings issued by some foreign governments, an international team of development experts is heading for hot spots in Mindanao amid rising hopes that a peace accord between the government and Moro rebels will be signed this year.

The London-based Voluntary Service Overseas has received a P30-million grant from the British government for livelihood training and peace-building programs in towns torn by armed conflict in Lanao del Norte and Sur.

To run for three years, the VSO mission aims to equip the poor with technical and managerial skills once the peace deal unlocks more development aid to Mindanao and spur economic activity, said VSO-Philippines Country Manager Francisco Lara.

"We want to make sure local organizations are prepared for the likely influx of aid once the peace agreement is signed. A lot of these funds—from the World Bank, bilateral agreements—are ready, but the question is whether the people can make the most use of them," he said.

And at a time when many international aid groups have withdrawn foreign personnel from the South due to security risks, VSO is sending over a dozen volunteers from the United Kingdom, Canada, the Netherlands and Kenya.

Foreign volunteer group

"We're the only foreign volunteer group that is in Mindanao today since (some governments) declared Mindanao a no-visit area," Lara noted.

"We're the only one left sending whites to the conflict areas, which is sad because Mindanao is an area needing the most assistance," he told the INQUIRER yesterday after signing VSO's cooperation agreement with the British Embassy in Manila.

British Ambassador Peter Beckingham described UK's support to the VSO initiative as "another vote of confidence by the British government in the Philippines."

The Philippines is one of the eight countries receiving British assistance under the UK-run program dubbed "Global Opportunities Fund: Engaging the Islamic World."

Seven of the 12-member VSO team have already arrived, with the rest expected in September, Lara said.

Composed of seasoned professionals—as opposed to youthful volunteers—the visiting experts will train Lanao folk mainly in coastal resource management and agro-forestry. Others will promote Muslim-Christian dialogues and provide post-trauma counseling for victims of armed clashes.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, July 7, 2005
14th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gen 44:18-21,23-29; 45:1-5

Gospel: Matthew 10:7-15

Jesus said to his disciples, "Go and proclaim this message: The kingdom of heaven is near. Heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, cleanse the lepers, and drive out demons. You received this as a gift, so give it as a gift. Do not carry any gold, silver or copper in your purses. Do not carry a traveler's bag, or an extra shirt, or sandals, or walking-stick workers deserve their living.

When you come to a town or a village, look for a worthy person and stay there until you leave.

"As you enter the house, wish it peace. If the people in the house deserve it, your peace will be on them; if they do not deserve it, your blessing will come back to you.

"And if you are not welcomed and your words are not listened to, leave that house or that town and shake the dust off your feet. I assure you, it will go easier for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than it will for the people of that town."

Commentary

They are to do the work that Jesus does: heal, bring back from the dead, cleanse lepers and drive out evil. They have been given this power as gift and they have experienced this gift in their own lives. They are to bring peace, the teachings of Jesus. If they aren't welcomed or listened to, they are to shake the dust and leave, and leave the judgment of that place to God, as of old. They are to rely on those who are open to the Word of God and stay in that place. They are to offer a blessing of peace and wait to see if it is received or if it is returned to them. This is the community of the road; the disciples that are sent out ahead to bring hope and a taste of the justice and peace that Jesus will bring more completely. This is our vocation, no matter what our lifestyle choices are—to be good news, as the disciples of Jesus. Where do we need to go today and this year?

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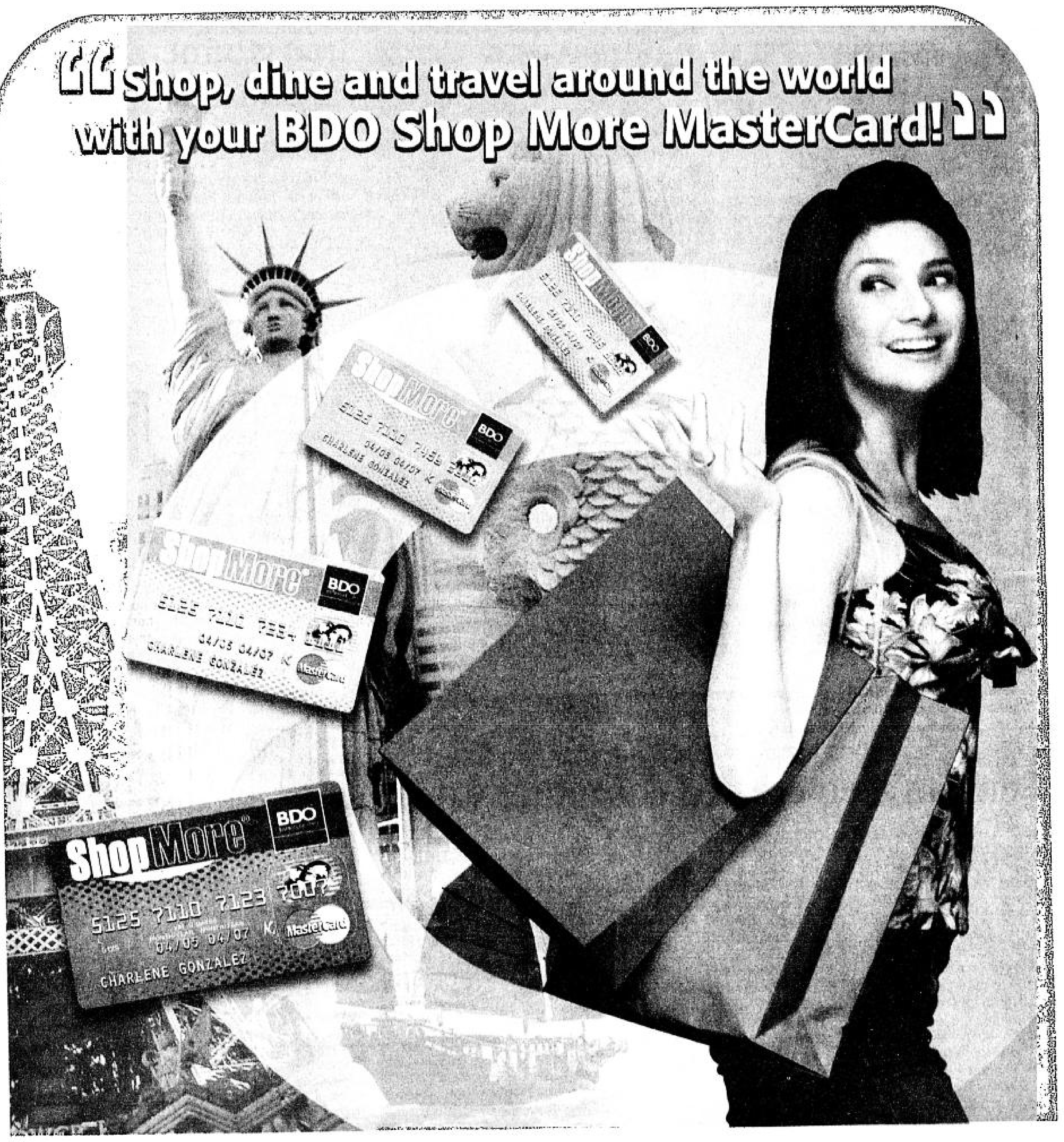
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Terror attacks worldwide surge in 2004

WASHINGTON—The US government on Tuesday dramatically raised its official 2004 estimate of international terror attacks to 3,192 from about 650 after adopting a broader definition of terrorism aimed at presenting a clearer picture of the worldwide phenomenon.

The National Counterterrorism Center, or NCTC, set up last December to integrate and analyze US intelligence on terrorism, said terror attacks left 6,060 people dead, 16,091 wounded and 6,282 taken hostage worldwide last year.

The Middle East/Persian Gulf region and South Asia accounted for 37 percent and 33 percent of all incidents, respectively.

The NCTC also announced a new analytical database called the Worldwide Incidents Tracking System that will allow public access beginning on Wednesday at the Internet Web site: www.tkb.org/NCTCHome.jsp.

The five-fold increase in the estimate of 2004 terror incidents results from the introduction of a new definition of terrorism that encompasses both international and domestic attacks and includes all injuries and property damages.

In late April, the Bush administration reported that 651 incidents of international terrorism had resulted in 1,907 deaths, 6,704 injuries and 710 kidnappings in 2004. The data was based on a narrower definition that excluded indigenous attacks and included only those injuries that were more than superficial and damages of over $10,000.

New data include all injuries and damages.

NCTC interim director John Brennan said his agency decided to broaden its definition of terrorism after concluding that the narrower criteria did not accurately depict the scope of what he called a growing and devastating world problem.

"There has in fact been an undercounting of international incidents prior to this year," he told a press briefing. "This represents a new statistical baseline for the phenomenon of worldwide terrorism. We want to be able to stand behind the information we put out and say, yes, it has integrity."

The State Department last year initially released erroneous figures that understated the attacks and casualties in 2003 and used the figures to argue that the Bush administration was prevailing in the war on terrorism.

It later said the number of people killed and injured in 2003 was more than double its original count as the number of "significant" terrorist attacks rose to a 20-year high of 175.

The newly calibrated data for 2004 showed that Iraq alone accounted for 866 attacks or about 27 percent of the total, with 2,708 people killed, 5,711 wounded and 222 kidnapped.

That compares with an April report of about 200 attacks in Iraq in 2004 vs a reported 22 in 2003.

President George W. Bush views says Iraq is a central front in the war on terrorism in part because the insurgency is led by Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who has sworn allegiance to al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden.

But the NCTC's data does not include attacks on US forces as terrorism incidents because the new criteria define terror as premeditated political violence directed at civilians and noncombatants including police and military assets in noncombat settings.

"I'm not saying other definitions are wrong," said Brennan, who added that the new database will be updated regularly and should provide a far more comprehensive and reliable picture of worldwide terrorism. *Reuters*

DEBT PROTEST
Indonesian students hold hanging baby dolls to symbolize "that even a baby has a responsibility to international debt," during a protest against debt for poor countries by rich countries and international institutions, in Jakarta July 6. AFP

Iraq gunmen targeting diplomats

BAGHDAD—Gunmen attacked envoys of two Muslim states in Baghdad on Tuesday, three days after Egypt's mission chief was snatched from the street, in what appeared to be a new campaign by insurgents to target diplomats in Iraq.

Pakistan immediately withdrew its ambassador from Baghdad after he survived an ambush. Hours earlier, the envoy from the Gulf Arab state of Bahrain was shot in the hand during what his government called a kidnap attempt as he drove to work.

Al-Qaida's wing in Iraq said it was holding Ihab el-Sherif, the Egyptian chief of mission abducted on Saturday. The group has beheaded foreign captives in the past.

In another development, al-Qaida's leader in Iraq Abu Musab al-Zarqawi said the group had formed a new armed wing to fight the Shiite militia Badr Brigade, according to an audio tape attributed to him and posted on the Internet on Tuesday.

Hadi al-Amery, the leader of Badr Brigade, a powerful Shiite militia which fought Saddam Hussein from exile in Iran, has denied running hit squads against Sunnis and said peaceful politics was the only way forward for his group.

Although the group now calls itself the Badr Organization and says it is a political movement, many Iraqis believe it is still a fighting force.

Russia also confirmed that an embassy convoy had been fired on, and a bomb struck private security guards near the Iranian embassy, adding to a picture of insurgents launching a campaign against diplomats in the capital.

"They're trying to send a message to countries not to boost their representation in Iraq," said Iraqi government spokesperson Laith Kubba. "It's a desperate attempt to halt the political process."

Washington urged other countries not to pull out. *Reuters*

45,000 soldiers, police to evacuate Gaza strip

JERUSALEM—In a display of resolve, Israel plans to send 45,000 soldiers and police to evacuate 9,000 settlers from the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank starting next month, Israel's defense minister said Tuesday, and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon insisted that opposition will not stop the pullout.

The massive deployment reflects concern that some resistance to the pullout might be violent. Many settlers are expected to offer passive resistance, but security officials have issued repeated assessments that extremists—settlers or backers from outside Gaza—might even open fire.

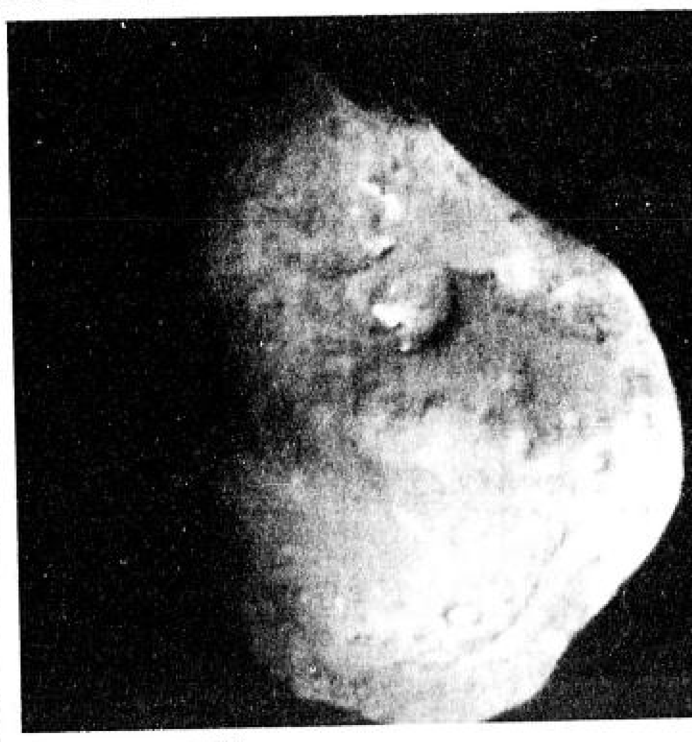
The main settlers' council issued a call on its followers on Tuesday to migrate en masse to Gaza on July 18, a month before the pullout is to begin. "Tens of thousands will march to Gush Katif (the main Gaza settlement bloc) to cancel the uprooting program, while avoiding violence and disruption of the lives of the country's citizens," the statement said.

Shaul Goldstein, a settler leader, admitted Tuesday that the pullout will go forward. "If you ask me realistically what are the chances to stop this plan, they are very, very small," he told foreign correspondents.

The military is expected to declare Gaza off limits to nonresidents before the pullout.

To implement the evacuation, troops will outnumber the settlers five to one, but the overwhelming ratio will not be reflected directly in the operation.

Security officials, speaking Tuesday on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of their positions, said the forces will be arrayed in six circles around Gaza. Police in the innermost circle, reinforced by soldiers, will remove the settlers. *AP*



SPACE TARGET
Comet Tempel I is seen by the Deep Impact impactor probe targeting sensor five minutes before the spacecraft collided with the comet on July 3, in this photograph released by NASA. REUTERS

German teen created computer worm

VERDEN, Germany—A German teenager confessed on the first day of his trial Tuesday to creating the Internet Sasser worm that waylaid millions of computers around the globe last year, a court official said.

The spokesperson for the tribunal, Katharina Kruetzfeldt, said that Sven Jaschan, now 19, admitted during the closed-doors hearing in this northern city to unleashing the destructive program in the spring of 2004.

The Sasser worm had struck on May 1 and in less than a week hit thousands of companies and as many as 18 million computers worldwide, forcing some businesses to shut temporarily in order to debug their systems.

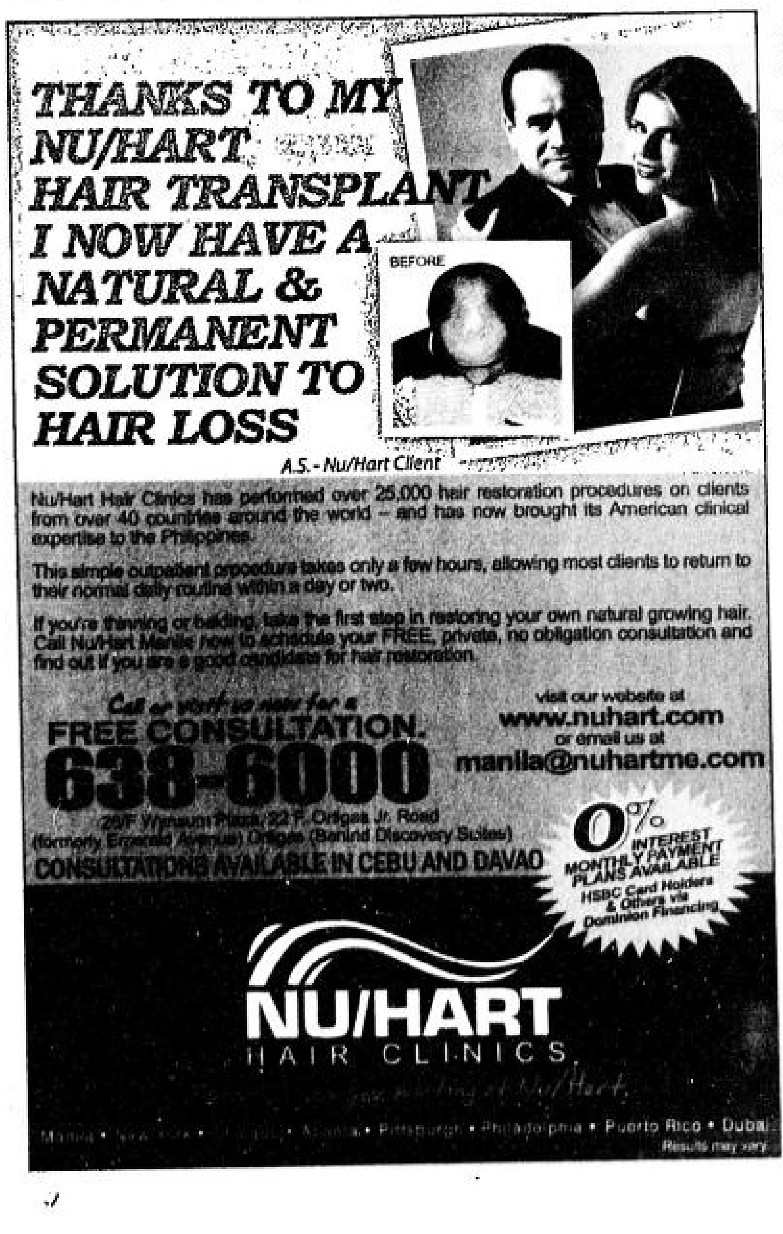
Posts affected were as far flung as the European Commission in Brussels, Taiwan's postal service and Australian rail traffic controllers.

US airline Delta was forced to cancel several flights and Finland's third-largest bank shut its 130 branch offices in a preventive move to keep the worm from infecting its computers.

Jaschan was known locally as a friendly high school student until police knocked at his parents' door in the northern village of Waffensen in May 2004.

He was fingered by an anonymous acquaintance, leading authorities to raid his home. They found substantial incriminating evidence—including the Sasser code on a computer he built himself—and Jaschan admitted during questioning to designing the worm.

He is now facing charges including sabotage, data manipulation and disruption of public administration. The charges would normally carry a prison sentence of up to five years. *AFP*



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Study: Lethal chemicals stored near US urban centers

WASHINGTON—Experts call it one of the worst-case scenarios in a terror attack: a cloud of lung-melting gas or a toxic fireball ripping through a US city. Potential casualties: 1 million or more.

At least 100 chemical plants nationwide could be targeted to produce such devastation, according to congressional researchers in a report that was to be released Wednesday.

The tally of plants possessing large amounts of 140 toxic and flammable chemicals was compiled by the Congressional Research Service using Environmental Protection Agency data from May, the most recent available. It represents one of the first public state-by-state breakdowns of how close potentially deadly facilities are located to the nation's largest population centers.

"Chemical facilities are at the top of the terrorists' target list, and I thought it would be helpful for the full picture to be presented," Rep. Edward J. Markey, a Massachusetts Democrat, said in an interview Tuesday.

The survey provided state-by-state figures but did not specify the names of the facilities or the cities in which they are located. However, researchers called it "unlikely" that the entire population would be affected by a single chemical release.

A 2003 database compiled by environmental watchdog groups said chemical facilities near major American population centers include the AMVAC America plant in Los Angeles, the Infineum USA Bayway Chemical Plant in northern New Jersey, and six plants that store chlorine and sulfur dioxide in Houston.

The EPA refuses to release its own list of detailed locations of the chemical manufacturing plants, oil refineries and storage facilities for fear doing so could aid terror plans. Environmental watchdog groups have compiled incomplete or outdated tallies of chemical facilities.

"Nobody wants us handing out information that people with nefarious things on their minds would use to their advantage," said EPA spokesperson Dale Kemery.

The report also tallied the numbers of chemical plants in smaller and rural areas. About one-fifth of the nation's chemical facilities—which exceed 10,000—are close to population centers.

Experts said the number of injuries or deaths caused by emissions of chemical explosives or toxic gases would depend largely on unpredictable factors like wind current or the extent of the leak. But they agreed the report highlights the continued danger of questionable security practices at plants.

If released, the toxic chemicals can "cause poison gas clouds to kill people," said Andy Igrejas, a chemical industry watchdog at the National Environmental Trust. "It's violent deaths you're talking about—it melts your lungs, essentially."

The report, completed at Markey's request, comes as the Homeland Security Department considers tougher federal regulation of the chemical industry, which has largely policed its own security procedures.

Last month, Homeland Security Acting Undersecretary Robert Stephan told congressional committees that "it has become clear that the entirely voluntary efforts of these companies alone will not sufficiently address security for the entire sector."

Stephan also estimated that fewer than 10,000 people would be killed and 40,000 sickened in a worst-case chemical release. Homeland Security officials have said only a small number of facilities—perhaps as few as a handful—have the capacity to cause widespread damage.

Several industry representatives contacted Tuesday declined immediate comment.

The report estimates at least 106 and as many as 111 plants are located near population centers of 1 million people or more. Congressional researchers could not provide a single number of facilities in question because they said they lack updated information in some cases, such as the types and volumes of chemicals produced.

Up to 29 of the plants were located in Texas—more than twice as many than in any other state. Illinois and California each had up to 13 such plants, Ohio had eight, and Florida and New Jersey had seven apiece.

Kemery, the EPA spokesperson, and environmental experts agreed that the overall estimate represents a drop from 123 plants five years ago—partially because of industry efforts to use alternatives to the deadly chemicals or to move away from densely populated areas.

But Markey said the industry still has not gone far enough to seek safer alternatives. *AP*

Africa, global warming top agenda of G8 summit

GLENEAGLES, Scotland—Compromise appears to be within reach on the two centerpiece issues at this year's meeting of the world's most industrialized nations—relieving crushing poverty in Africa and developing a plan to combat global warming.

The leaders of the Group of Eight nations were scheduled to begin arriving at this posh golf resort Wednesday, with discussions beginning over dinner at the Gleneagles hotel.

Protesters, though, were already in place, peacefully pushing for decisive action on Africa and the environment—or violently demonstrating their complete opposition to G8 and the world order they associate with it.

Early Wednesday, anarchists and anti-globalization protesters clashed with police, smashed car windows, threw rocks and attempted to blockade one of the main approach roads to the exclusive Gleneagles resort hosting the summit. Anti-globalization campaigners have vowed to disrupt the summit.

Summit preparations continued, with leaders' aides meeting behind closed doors to try to reach agreement on the two issues British Prime Minister Tony Blair has made the main focus of this year's summit.

US President George W. Bush cleared the way for one compromise last week when he finally agreed, after heavy lobbying from Blair, to pledge to double US support for Africa to more than US$8.6 billion (euro7.2 billion) by 2010.

However, compromise has proven tougher on Blair's other key issue, developing a plan to curb emissions of greenhouse gases, with US officials lobbying behind the scenes against setting any specific goals or timetables for emission reductions as called for in the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

Sir Michael Jay, Blair's representative in the discussions, called the negotiations "pretty intense" but he predicted the G8 would reach an accord that recognized the problem and the need to combat it.

The United States is the only G8 country that has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol, which was negotiated by the Clinton administration in Kyoto, Japan, but rejected by Bush shortly after he took office in 2001. The United States has been at odds with most of the other nations regarding global warming, raising questions about the scientific findings on climate change.

Bush's national security adviser, Stephen Hadley, said the G8 nations needed to adopt an approach that encompassed pollution, climate change, poverty alleviation, development and ensuring reliable, affordable, secure energy.

"We can all agree we've got ... interrelated problems, and we need to be doing things about them," Hadley told reporters Tuesday aboard Air Force One. "And the interesting thing is, there is a program in action which we think will come out of this G-8 summit, in which we can all agree as to what we're going to do about it."

In addition to boosting aid for Africa, the G8 leaders were expected to endorse a deal their finance ministers reached in June to wipe out US$40 billion in debt that 18 poor countries—14 of them in Africa—owe international lending agencies including the World Bank. Blair also was pushing the rich nations to reach agreement on cutting farm subsidies that rich nations give their farmers, which depress imports of farm products from poor nations.

This year's G8 talks at a 345-hectare resort that has been sealed off by heavy security marked the fourth consecutive summit held at remote resorts following the 2001 summit in Genoa, Italy, where hundreds of thousands of protesters clashed violently with police.

In addition to the two key issues Blair selected, the discussions are expected to cover the world's political hot spots, from Iraq to the Middle East peace process and the nuclear ambitions of Iran and North Korea. *AP*

Experts release blueprint vs bird flu virus

KUALA LUMPUR—UN agencies and animal experts on Wednesday released a blueprint to overhaul Asia's poultry industry to halt the spread of the deadly bird flu virus, including by cleaning up markets and backyard farms.

The strategy was aimed at fighting the virulent H5N1 strain of avian influenza at its source, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) chief veterinary officer Joseph Domenech said.

"We agreed that it is vital to urgently change or even end a number of farming practices that are dangerous to humans," he told reporters.

The FAO, World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) produced the guidelines after three days of talks in the Malaysian capital.

Domenech said the initial focus of the campaign would be on "wet markets," where poultry is commonly butchered and sold in Asia, and on small-scale farms where animals live in close proximity to humans, encouraging the spread of disease.

"This is where the risk is, and where most often the human cases are coming from," he said of the bird flu virus which has claimed 55 lives in Asia since the outbreak began in 2003.

The FAO said wet markets were a major area of concern because animals were often slaughtered in unsanitary conditions.

"These activities constitute a high risk to people who are exposed to contaminated animals or products such as blood, feces, feathers and carcasses," it said in a statement.

Some 60 scientists at the meeting called for a campaign to separate different species like chickens, ducks and pigs in small farms to lower the risk of the virus being transmitted or mutating into a form more easily spread among humans.

So far nearly all the victims of bird flu have been infected by sick animals, but experts fear that if the virus mutates and begins circulating among humans, it could trigger a pandemic that could kill tens of millions of people. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Zarqawi's mentor arrested

DUBAI—Jordanian authorities have arrested the spiritual mentor of Iraq's al-Qaida leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, Al Jazeera television said. The Arabic channel quoted its correspondent as saying authorities arrested Issam Barqawi, better known as Sheikh Abu Mohammad al-Maqdisi, as the television was broadcasting an interview with him. Islamist and security sources have said the 43-year-old Muslim cleric—who molded the militant Islamic views of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi—was released on June 28 after a six-month detention at intelligence headquarters following his acquittal at a trial of Jordanian and Saudi sympathizers of al-Qaida. He had been under close surveillance by authorities at his house near Zarqa, east of the capital, where fellow Jordanian Zarqawi was born. *Reuters*

Thai minister resigns

BANGKOK—Thailand's deputy commerce minister resigned Wednesday after the country's financial watchdog said a company run by his family had falsified financial statements in an apparent effort to boost its share price. Suriya Lapwisuthisin helped co-found Picnic Corp., a cooking gas distributor, a decade ago before withdrawing from the business earlier this year to serve in the Cabinet of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's second administration. The Securities and Exchange Commission of Thailand said the company had misled investors by filing incorrect financial statements for 2004. "I am resigning because I do not want the government to worry about my family matters," he told a news conference. "We will fight the case by ourselves." *AP*

Missing US commandos

KABUL—US forces were searching for the last of four commandos who vanished in the rugged mountains of eastern Afghanistan, while two of the soldiers were found dead and another was saved, the US military said Tuesday. The four Navy SEALs went missing last week. A helicopter sent to save them was shot down June 28, killing all 17 aboard. "Coalition forces located the bodies of two US service members during a combat search and rescue operation July 4 in Kunar province," said a US military statement. The soldiers were part of a force conducting counter-terrorism operations in Kunar, it said. The US military said the bodies had been taken to a US military hospital at Bagram Airfield where they were officially pronounced dead. "Another member of the force was located and airlifted to the Bagram hospital with non-life-threatening injuries," the statement said. *AFP*

Rice to visit Asia

WASHINGTON—US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will travel to China, Thailand, Japan and South Korea this week, but will skip a key security meeting in Southeast Asia later in the month, officials said on Tuesday. Rice's July 8-13 visit to Asia comes amid signs of gathering momentum for a fourth round of six-nation talks on the North Korean nuclear dispute, possibly this month. She will hold nuclear consultations with Beijing, Tokyo and Seoul, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said. However, in a development that analysts have criticized as shortsighted, the top US diplomat will send her deputy to attend the annual Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum in the Lao capital of Vientiane on July 28-29, US officials indicated. *Reuters*

Hindus rage against attack on temple

AYODHYA, India—Hindu nationalists stormed an airport in central India and briefly shut it down Wednesday in nationwide protests over an attack they blamed on Muslim militants a day earlier at a northern Indian shrine that forms the heart of a decades-old sectarian conflict.

More than 200 slogan-shouting activists of the World Hindu Council broke past security officers to storm the domestic airport at Indore in Madhya Pradesh state, local administrator Vivek Agarwal said.

Activists smashed a VIP lounge and sprawled onto the tarmac, blocking a New Delhi-bound flight for about an hour. Police beat them back with bamboo truncheons and arrested 40 people. Airport operations later resumed, Agarwal said.

Tuesday's attack left the six assailants dead and wounded three security guards at a makeshift Hindu shrine at a site in the town of Ayodhya considered holy by both Hindus and Muslims.

One attacker blew himself up in a jeep, tearing a hole in iron railings encircling the complex and allowing the five other attackers to enter the complex where they died in a gunfight with guards, police said.

Hindu nationalists blamed the attack on Pakistan-backed Muslim militants and called for nationwide protests while officials tightened security to deter protesters from clashing with Muslims, who are about 12 percent of the 1 billion-plus population. *AP*

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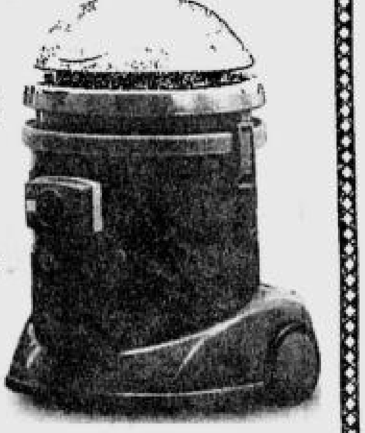

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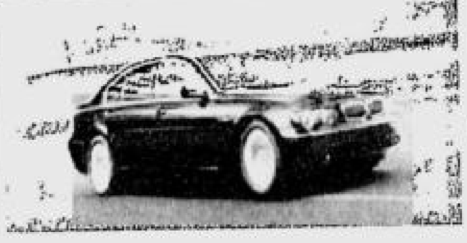

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The IDS Group is a leading integrated-distribution services provider in Asia comprising IDS Marketing, IDS Logistics and IDS Manufacturing. Headquartered in Hong Kong, the Group provides a full menu of services along the value-chain from Manufacturing to Marketing with Logistics as the fundamental engine of our growth and success.

With ground operations covering nine ASEAN and Greater China markets, the IDS Group has a deep and extensive distribution and logistics network in the region currently serving over 360 customers, including a multitude of blue-chip, multi-national brands in the fast-moving consumer goods and healthcare industries.

In the Philippines, the success story of the IDS Group continues. In just three years, its initial venture in the Philippines, IDS Logistics Philippines, has grown phenomenally and established itself as one of the leading logistics management companies in the Philippines, with a stable of clients that counts among the country's leading consumer brands.

Building on the successful track record of IDS Logistics Philippines, the IDS Group is now extending sales, marketing and distribution services to brand owners operating in the Philippines, through its newly established company, IDS Marketing (Philippines), Inc.

IDS Logistics

A COMPREHENSIVE LOGISTICS NETWORK OF DISTRIBUTION CENTERS AND COUNTRY-WIDE DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

IDS Logistics now covers the Philippines through major distribution centers located in Manila, Cebu and Davao, as well as customer service centers in five key locations (Dagupan, San Fernando [Pampanga], Bacolod, Iloilo and Cagayan de Oro). IDS Logistics Philippines offers over 90,000 sq m of storage space, including cool room facilities, an advanced IT network and a warehouse management system that provides customers with full real-time visibility of their product inventory and consignment status.

IDS Logistics provides the logistics infrastructure and backbone for the delivery of effective sales and distribution services by IDS Marketing. They complement each other in making available the benefits of integrated distribution to customers, enabling the IDS Group's unique proposition of value-chain logistics.

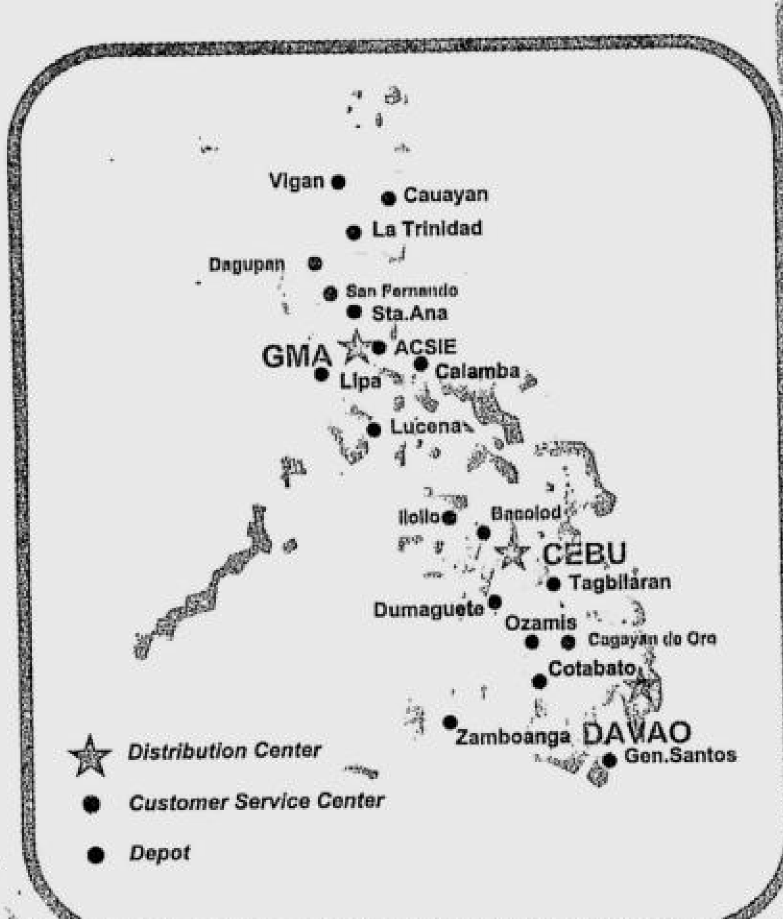
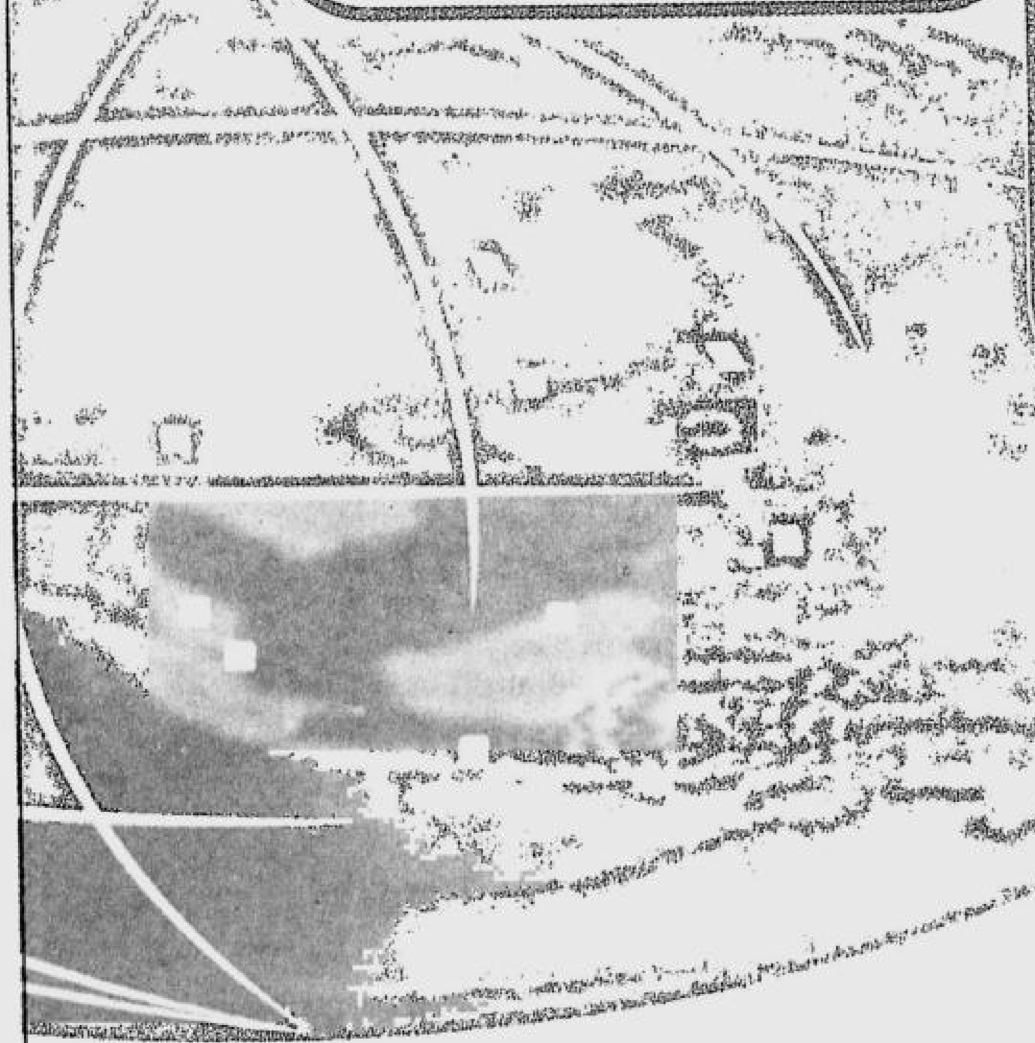


Photo shows Dr. Victor Fung, Li & Fung Group Chairman, receiving the Unilever 2004 Vendor of the Year Award from Unilever Philippines Chairman & CEO, Howard Belton.

DS Logistics Philippines was recently selected among 300 suppliers and partners by Unilever companies in the Philippines as Vendor of the Year for 2004, for being the vendor that best demonstrated the meaning of partnership with Unilever during the year.



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Ben Chang

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Vicente Dinglasa

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Emmanuel B
IDS Logistics Phili

*"Through IDS Marketing, we
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IDS Marketing Phi

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*"IDS Logistics has proven its
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with IDS in the years
Congratulations to the manag
employees for a job well done*

Chris Nelson - Managing Director,
Philip Morris Philippines Manufacturing, Inc.

*"Our relationship with IDS h
long way, starting with wareh
logistics. IDS Logistics has
Partner to Gillette! We took a
and now utilize IDS Marketing
and provide superior product
Consumers; helping us in ou
Shave More Faces, Brush M
and to Power More Device
market leading brands: Gillette, Oral-B, and Dura*

*My very Best Wishes and congratulations to IL
launch in the Philippines."*

Joey Hidalgo - Country Director,
Gillette Philippines

IDS Group

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A member of the Li & Fung Group

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ıccess In The Philippines

ıely glad to see the strong growth of IDS Logistics
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Sales and Marketing services business. This is
with the continuing support of our business
of which are also collaborating with us regionally
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IDS Group Managing Director

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Jun Alli,
lippines Managing Director.

ıNING TOGETHER
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"The partnership between Watsons and IDS Logistics continues to grow. We now work together in four countries around Asia. Our relationship in the Philippines saw the start of a full cross-dock operation with IDS bringing in expertise and systems to maximize the benefits. This has allowed our Philippine operations to grow from just over 60 stores in 2003 to almost 120 stores today. We continue to rely on them as we set ambitious growth targets in this market. Congratulations to IDS on this celebration!"

Nigel Healey - Regional Managing Director, South East Asia, Watsons Personal Care Stores

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More Teeth,
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"IDS has really been investing on its people - getting highly capable managers and providing them the right training and motivation to deliver their best. This will definitely be a key factor of your success now and in the future. Goodluck to IDS and let's build our business together!"

Victor Filart, Jr. - Sales Director, Associated British Food & Beverages

A member of the Li & Fung Group

LI & FUNG, FOUNDED 1906, A STRONG ASIAN HERITAGE

The IDS Group is a member of the Li & Fung Group. With a turnover well over US$ 6 billion, the company's considerable financial strength, its renowned supply-chain management competency and its intimate knowledge of the Asian economic fabric are at the very foundation of the IDS Group's success today.

IDS Marketing

BRINGING A TRACK RECORD OF OUTSTANDING BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS IN ASIA TO THE PHILIPPINES

IDS Marketing brings to our customers in the Philippines a wealth of experience in delivering successful business results borne out of working in close partnership with customers in other Asian countries. These close collaborations have produced:

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- Substantial increase in sales turn-over after years of stagnant volume performance
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IDS Marketing Philippines operates a well-trained sales organization and proven distribution system to bring your products directly to over 2,000 key account distribution points including supermarkets, drugstore chains, petrol stations and convenience stores. In addition your products can be made available to more than 30,000 secondary and tertiary outlets indirectly, through the IDS Marketing regional distribution network covering all the major population centers across the country.

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BOSCH
SC Johnson A FAMILY COMPANY
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OPINION

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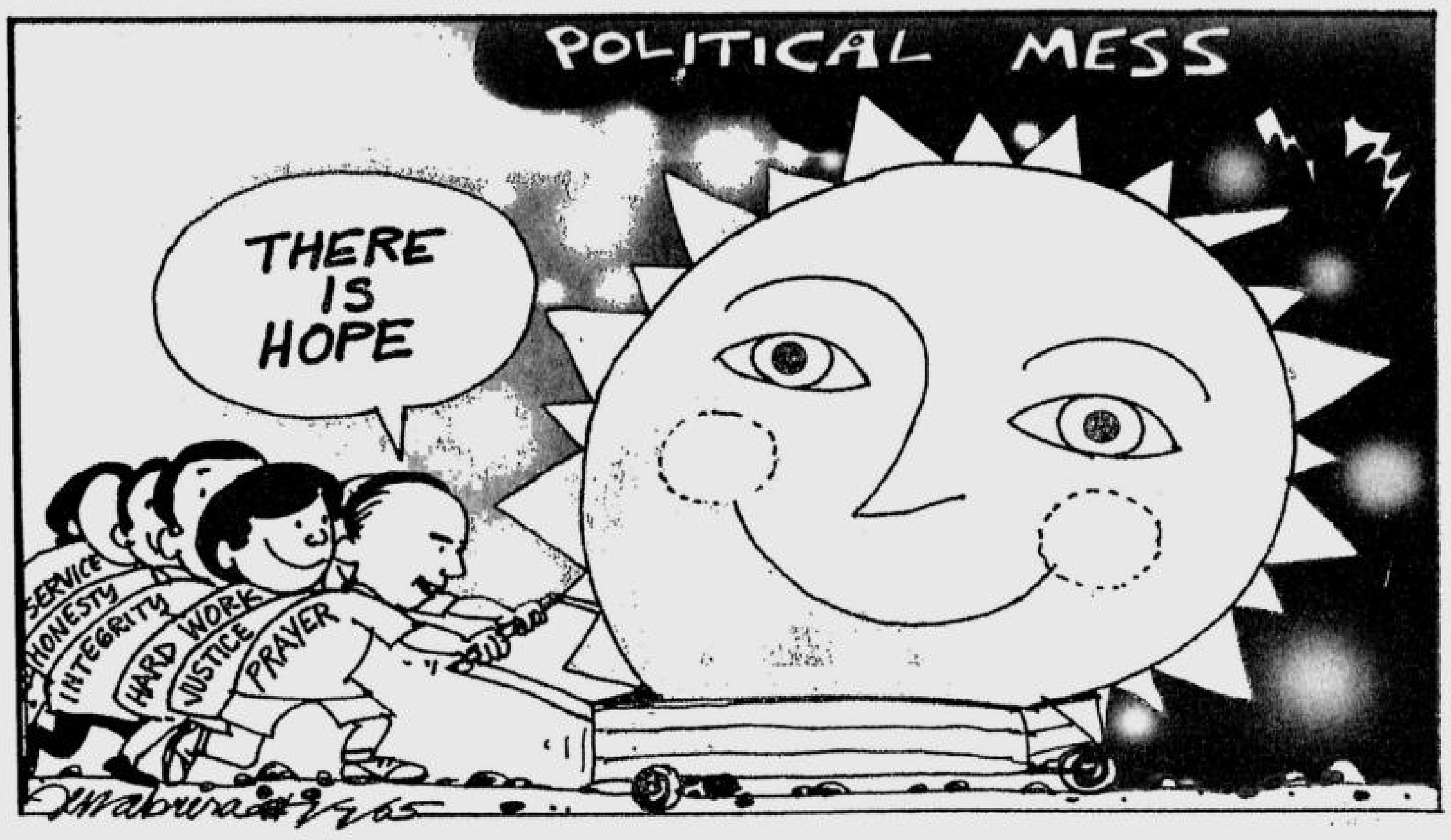

Guide to legislation

EDITORIAL

FOR all the grandstanding and interminable nitpicking and hairsplitting that mar every hearing, the inquiry being conducted by the House of Representatives into the wiretapped conversations allegedly between former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano and President Macapagal-Arroyo, among others, may yet prove to be a most productive exercise. At the very least, those hearings have already provided our people an opportunity to hear the controversial tapes without fear of being sent to jail, as Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez had earlier warned. Knowing the contents of those tapes is essential if the people are to understand the political crisis now engulfing the nation and make rational judgments about their leaders and those who propose to lead them in the future.

Much as the opposition would love to, the tapes by themselves cannot be used as evidence in legal proceedings, as legal experts keep reminding everyone. However, nothing but sheer laziness or defeatism prevents the opposition from using the information they contain to track down witnesses and dig for other evidence that would help them build a solid case for impeaching the President.

But for Congress as a whole, those tapes provide a wealth of information that should lead to some very urgent and necessary legislation. For one thing, if those tapes came from military intelligence, they show how a public agency can be used for private ends and, more alarmingly, to illegally monitor the activities of persons who are not even suspected of criminal activities. The Anti-Wire Tapping Law clearly needs to be fine-tuned to prevent such misuse of government resources and abuse of this power.

Another disturbing thing that the taped conversations tended to show was how military and police officials actively engaged in partisan—even criminal—activities in behalf of their candidates. It could be that they were acting from personal conviction, but it is more likely they did so for self-promotion. Promotions and assignments in the police and military organizations, like those in the government bureaucracy, have become so highly politicized that some police and military officials are willing to take an active part in politics to ensure advancement in their careers. This is a most dangerous tendency that could result in the armed forces being converted into a private army of politicians. Legislation is needed to guarantee the neutrality of the armed forces and the police and to help promote professionalism in these services.

The third area crying for a lot of corrective legislation is the electoral process. If there is one thing those tapes clearly show, it is how very easily the electoral process can be corrupted and its outcome manipulated. All it takes is one unscrupulous official occupying a strategic position to ensure victory for the highest officials of the land. It seems unthinkable that one official, with help from a handful of cohorts, has the power to substitute his own will for the sovereign will of the people expressed through their votes. But the politicians who called Garcillano seemed to believe so, and they called, pleaded and offered bribes to get him on their side.

If democracy is to survive, Congress should make sure this doesn't happen again, starting with the more judicious exercise of its authority to give its advice and consent to presidential appointees through the process of confirmation. Then it must craft laws that would make it difficult and painful for anyone to cheat in future elections.

Rebuilding Iraq

FOREIGN COMMENT

IRAQIS hardly have reason for great celebration even though it's one year ago that the temporary government was handed sovereignty from the American-led invasion force that had toppled Saddam Hussein.

The truth is that one year later unrest in the country is so great that even the United States speaks of revolts continuing not just for five or six years but up to eight, 10 or 12. The Iraqis have maintained the political process which will lead the country to a new constitution and secure the newly won democracy. In itself that's a great achievement. But it can also quickly be brought into peril if all the other problems, which every day make Iraqis' lives a bloody affair, aren't solved. Therefore it's important to rethink the strategy and—not least—to launch a much more direct effort to rebuild the country which is a focal point for stability.

The original occupation forces, including Denmark, must show more clearly they are determined to win the peace as much as they were to win the war, and that calls for quicker reconstruction of electricity, water and food supplies. *Politiken (Copenhagen, Denmark)*

Recurring lunacy

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

WAS it Mark Twain who once cracked, "Truth is scarce, so we use it sparingly around here"? That aptly describes the miasma of smudged truth that blankets today's controversies over wiretapped tapes, *jueteng* and assorted mayhem.

These legislative farces are getting nowhere, Justice Isagani Cruz notes. Rigged mainly on hearsay, the Senate jueteng inquiry won't hold water. Mutating tapes, in the House, fractured the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

They'd be like the proverbial snowball in hell if brought before the courts. "They have little chance of prospering or surviving," Cruz wrote in the INQUIRER.

So, why is this tax-funded circus still running despite almost-zero credibility? They don't aid legislation. Nor do they seek truth, let alone justice.

Welcome to a post-graduate tutorial in Propaganda 401. Behind parliamentary immunity's skirts, legislators smear all around. They hew to that "Alice in Wonderland" rule of Lewis Carroll: "What I tell you three times is true."

That's also gross.

Like all citizens, even suspended lawyers, like Alan Paguia, must uphold the law. Yet, he spliced a 32-minute reel from three-hour tapes procured through fracturing the Anti-Wiretapping Law. Was he merely using the truth sparingly? Paguia welcomes "immunity from prosecution."

Ex-NBI officer Samuel Ong boasts owning the bootlegged "mother of all tapes." Ong sought vainly church sanctuary.

Didn't they hear that retching? That was the Anti-Wiretapping Law author, Sen. Lorenzo Tañada, puking in his grave.

"Have you no sense of decency, sir, at long last?" Joseph Welch asked the witch-hunting Sen. Joseph McCarthy at the June 1954 US Senate hearings. "Have you no sense of decency left?"

Welch's remark resounded in the 67-to-22 vote that stripped McCarthy of his committee for stomping on truth and fairness. "I didn't want to get into a pissing contest with that skunk," aides quoted President Dwight Eisenhower as saying.

Despite this shortage of decency, ordinary citizens here resent truth-blurring. People care about integrity, the processes by which officials are elected, and credibility of institutions that ensure our way of life.

That anxiety is reflected in those statements of concern. They come in leaflets or full-page ads put out by schools, church leaders, civil society, government employees and overseas workers.

To survive as a humane, free society, we must have access to truth. Otherwise, this slow slide to chaos will speed up.

"My way of joking is to tell the truth," George Bernard Shaw once said. "It's the funniest joke in the world."

Thus, Prof. Solita Collas-Monsod suggests we create "an independent, fact-finding commission to get to the bottom of things." In her INQUIRER column, she argued that an impartial body—say, of five members backed with legal powers and integrity—could get to the truth. They'd dispel the miasma of skepticism.

Findings could help revamp the Commission on Elections or be used in an impeachment, Monsod said. Its conclusions won't be crippled by credibility problems.

She doesn't discount the hurdles. A commission would have to be created by law. And both administration and opposition seem perfectly satisfied with today's muddle.

Others fear "their names might crop up." The latest addition to the "Garci" tapes—Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile—knows. Jinggoy Estrada hasn't commented.

Like Diogenes, can we find five trustworthy competent men and women? Monsod asked. If not, "there'd be no hope for the Philippines."

Is this hunger for truth quixotic?

Support for such a commission from the University of Santo Tomas and others indicates there is resonance. But a December 1972 letter that Sen. Jose Diokno wrote, while held in solitary confinement by the "New Society," underscores a commission's value. "We can, even now, scrutinize our past, try to pinpoint what went wrong, determine what led to this madness," Diokno wrote. "And how, when it ends, we can make sure it need never happen again."

Indeed, the tragic thing is that this madness is happening all over again. But our historical experience with commissions is mixed.

Future coups could be preempted and stability reestablished if recommended reforms were implemented, the Davide Commission wrote in its 609-page report. But a weak government, a tainted elite and corrupted military aborted change. So, the Feliciano Commission convened to address "madness happening all over again" in the Magdalo mutiny.

Significantly, we never set up a truth commission to confront martial law's massive abuses. In contrast, South Africa's truth commission faced up to its past and prosecuted apartheid defenders. Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Bosnia and Korea also created truth-seeking mechanisms.

As those mutating tapes show, in this country "everything seems infinitely negotiable," Dr. Alran Bengzon told the Ateneo-Wisconsin University conference on "Memory, Truth-Telling and the Pursuit of Justice." "Truth becomes whatever pleases the powers that be."

Filipinos are bogged down in a "state of denial," the sociologist John Carroll notes. Moral outrage is followed by willingness to forget massive crimes. "These reflect a weakness of the common conscience." Unless these values are reaffirmed, the country may wander forever "in the wilderness of valueless power plays among the elite."

A truth commission will have to face that stark reality first. But to give up would be to consent to lunacy recurring all over again.

* * *

E-mail: juan_mmercado@pacific.net.ph

Hearts and minds

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THREE perceptions have emerged from informal talks among the bishops, says Deogracias Iñiguez, chair of the CBCP communications commission. These are impeachment, if there is adequate evidence GMA has cheated, status quo or resignation. This will be the subject of talks when the bishops meet this weekend to elect a new set of officers to the powerful Church body. But though the bishops have different perceptions, Iñiguez says, they share the belief that the truth about the wiretapped tape "must be ferreted out in a legal forum."

Peachy Yamsuan, communication officer of the Archdiocese of Manila, echoes the thought. The bishops want to "set a moral tone to the controversy," she says. "It's not going to be easy. It's not going to be a cut-and-dried decision."

But why on earth, or heaven, shouldn't it be easy? Why shouldn't it be a cut-and-dried decision?

The bishops do not exist to decide on what's best for this country's political life, they exist to decide on what's best for this country's spiritual life. The bishops do not exist to decide on what's best for this country's body, they exist to decide what's best for this country's soul. What political order we should have after GMA goes, we can all debate to our heart's content. What fate GMA should have, we may not. The answer is cut and it is dried.

What more "adequate evidence" do you need that GMA cheated in the elections? And what truth about the tape needs to be ferreted out in a legal forum? She confessed to the crime, for, well, Christ's sake. But not before lying some more to the public. Yes, I attribute that to her notwithstanding that it was Ignacio Bunye and Raul Gonzalez who did the actual lying. If the President cannot take responsibility for what her press and justice secretaries say, she cannot take responsibility for anything.

What else could she do but admit to being in the tape? Like I said, God in his (her?) infinite wisdom gave her that exceptionally distinctive voice, the better to reduce her to silence when the time came. But that being the case, what do the bishops have to decide that is so complex, that refuses to lend itself to a cut-and-dried answer? Whether calling up a senior Comelec official while he was busy counting votes is a lapse in judgment or a lapse into rottenness? Whether asking him to assure her a lead of one million votes over FPJ is an impropriety or a heinous crime? You believe all that is a lapse in judgment or an impropriety, you shouldn't be a bishop, you should be a PR man. You shouldn't work for God, you should work for Dante Ang. You can't distinguish God from Ang, you should hang yourself.

The bishops want to set a moral tone to the controversy—as to everything else, which is what they are there for—they have their path laid out for them. That is to condemn what GMA has done, that is to forgive her as she asks but only after making her do penance, that is to ask her to resign. Setting a moral tone to issues, controversial or not, is not a choice, it is a necessity; it is not a want, it is a need. Most of all for the one institution in this country that professes to uphold the good and demands to be the shepherd of the faithful. The sheep have no business following a shepherd that is more lost than them.

Whether or not people power is needed is a secondary or derivative issue, one the bishops can talk about till they're blue in the face. Whether or not GMA may continue to rule is the primary and basic issue, one whose answer stares them in the face. Well, maybe except Socrates Villegas who, like Mike Defensor, likes to rescue kidnap victims who enjoy the luxury of cell phones while in dire captivity. If I remember my religion class right, confronting evil is a demand made upon us, not an invitation. We damn evil because we must, not because we have nothing better to do. What applies to us applies even more to bishops.

While at this, Corazon Aquino says she is too old to lead another people power. Well, who's asking her to? The second one quite incidentally wasn't hers, or Cardinal Sin's, notwithstanding that both of them readily claimed it as their own, Sin especially who rerouted the protest rallies to the Edsa Shrine, thereby bolstering his claim by right, or rite, of conquest. But Edsa II in fact belonged to civil society, the media and ordinary folk who rose against Erap, protesting everything from his plan to bury Marcos in the Libingan ng mga Bayani to his actually burying the country under the rule of gangsters. Cory may want to be a little more appreciative of those who came before her, whose martyrs' fire blazed a trail before her.

But quite apart from that, who wants her to lead another people power? All we want is for her to see right and wrong. All we want is for her to damn what is wrong and praise what is right. No one is too old for that. Indeed, age has been known to sharpen spiritual sight even as it dulls the physical one. Bishop Julio Labayen is so much older than Cory, yet he hasn't stopped fighting corruption and wrongdoing.

That is all we are asking the bishops to do, too. We don't particularly care whether they join rallies or not. We don't particularly care whether they support another people power or not. We don't particularly care whether they are able to divine the future political shape of this country or not. But we do care that they answer the fundamental question we all face today: Can someone who stole the presidency continue to keep it? The challenge before them is not showing numbers, it is righting wrongs. The challenge before them is not closing ranks, it is opening eyes.

Forget waiting for the Holy Ghost to descend upon you and give you tongues of fire, people. Just look into your hearts.

Other voices

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN AN IMPRESSIVE show of force yesterday, prominent members of the League of Mayors came out swinging for the constitutional process and respect for the law in resolving the present crisis. Among them were Lito Atienza, Feliciano Belmonte, Edward Hagedorn, Rodrigo Duterte, Hernani Braganza and chief executives from Central Luzon, such as Jerry Pelayo of Candaba, Pampanga, Noel Villanueva of Concepcion and Florante Cojuangco of Bamban (both in Tarlac). Many of them stated out-and-out support for President Macapagal-Arroyo, especially the Central Luzon mayors who cited how her vision for their region has generated jobs. But what united them all was their allegiance to the Constitution and rejection of extra-constitutional maneuverings, such as a military junta as well as People Power to oust the present leadership. The thinking of most patriotic Filipinos appears to have jibed with those of the mayors—let's uphold the Constitution.

* * *

Reports say that the different versions of the Garcillano tapes now with the House have brought out the fact that aside from GMA, a good number of politicians, including those from the opposition, called up Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano during the May 2004 elections. Among them were former President Joseph Estrada and his son Jinggoy, candidates Rodolfo Biazon, Robert Barbers, Jamby Madrigal and Ernesto Maceda. These reports were bolstered by the INQUIRER story yesterday, which quoted Garcillano as admitting he talked to a number of candidates, among them, vice-presidential candidate Loren Legarda, Sen. Mar Roxas and House Minority Leader Francis Escudero. As expected, the former candidates, promptly denied Garci's claim that they called him, but Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos has confirmed receiving calls from the opposition. The only senator who has admitted having spoken with Comelec officials is Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile. Biazon has taken the "no comment" position.

* * *

This is the difficulty. In every election, there are many candidates who call up national and local Comelec officials. This practice has been deemed not only customary but necessary, in view of the many frauds attending our elections. Candidates bring to the poll body's attention all manner of electoral problems. As Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez pointed out to me at a recent social gathering: "When problems crop up, candidates don't run to the police or the barangay captain, but to the Comelec." He stressed that such act doesn't necessarily constitute a violation of law since the poll body has multi-functions during elections.

The opposition, however, has made GMA's phone calls to Garcillano the central issue in the current political crisis, and is determined to pull her down on it. A little over half of Metro Manilans interviewed by the SWS believe GMA was trying to manipulate the elections in those calls. But the emergence of allegations that many other candidates, including members of the opposition, made calls to Comelec officials blunts that offensive. For instance, House Minority Leader Francis Escudero is alleged to have lunched with a Comelec official to lobby for his father who was then a candidate for senator. Escudero, who has been an effective opposition spokesman, publicly denied any wrongdoing, but when Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentebella tried to elicit an outright denial from him, his allies parried it.

* * *

The revelations that many candidates called up Comelec officials raise more questions. For instance, how do they affect the accusations against GMA? Her allies argue that GMA's calls were no different from those of other candidates who were merely voicing apprehension over their votes. DENR Secretary Michael Defensor cited a call where GMA expressed concern over reports that some ballot boxes from Camarines Norte turned out empty when they were opened during the Congress canvassing. There was also the portion in the wiretapped conversation where she was asking for an update concerning reports that FPJ beat her by a margin of something like 25,000 votes in Cotabato. It's easy to imagine that she must have been floored by the confirmation from the other end of the line that she lost to FPJ not just by 25,000 but by 50,000.

* * *

On the other hand, the Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan groups, led by former Senate President Jovito Salonga, argued in a position paper that "other officials may cheat and lie, but the president of the land, who occupies the highest office within the gift of our people, is expected to be, first of all, honest, fair and truthful." There's no question that the moral standards for the top leader have to be far more stringent; as the good book says, he to whom much is given, much is demanded. But this doesn't erase the question in many minds that if the act was illegal and unlawful for GMA, it should also be illegal and unlawful for the other candidates.

* * *

The allegations and counter-allegations about who called the Comelec official and what they talked about have cropped up in the course of determining the authenticity of the controversial tapes. Up to now, as Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. admitted over ANC yesterday, not one of the tapes has been verified to be authentic. As expected, GMA's allies sought to discredit them. For instance, Rep. Luis Villafuerte asserted that the three-hour tapes exhibited some discrepancies in dates, and some sentences from various voices "seemed to have been left hanging." The inference was that there was tampering; that's his interpretation. The disclosure by Alan Pagula to Time magazine and the House that his source for his set of tapes was opposition leader Francisco Tatad also immediately colors this issue.

To think that the survival of this government seems to hinge on this classic confusion!

1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005 (2)

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

IN OCTOBER, we will know if the nominated "1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005" will collectively be named as this year's winner of the Peace Prize.

Last June 29, the names of the nominated 1,000 women (999 actually) from 153 countries were announced simultaneously in different parts of the world. Twenty-seven are from the Philippines.

Behind this unprecedented global search for 1,000 women was the Association 1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005 which was begun in 2003 on the conviction that the commitment of women working for peace should be acknowledged and publicized. Last week, I wrote about the criteria used.

Who are they, where are they, what are they doing? (You can read the short biographies in www.1000peacewomen.org.) Here are the Philippines' 27 women and what they have to say on their work for peace.

Ma. Lorenza "Binky" Dalupan-Palm: "The peace process involves more than negotiations (with armed groups). You can't achieve social transformation just sitting across a negotiating table."

Cecile Guidote-Alvarez: "I envision a world free from poverty, pollution, ignorance, injustice. This must be done through culture so that it is peaceful. We have to develop minds and hearts that care and share."

Miriam "Dedet" L. Suacito: "Blessed are my companions who offered their lives while walking the path to peace."

Corazon "Dinky" Juliano-Soliman: "Visualizing peace means sounds of laughter, conversation, life at its best, singing, dancing, productivity and abundance."

Adoracio "Dory" C. Avisado: "I see the need for the Supreme Court to act like a conductor of an orchestra. Once they raise the baton, everyone will follow its way."

Delia Ediltrudes "Duds" Santiago-Locsin: "People should learn to let public officials know that what they are doing is wrong. They should not keep quiet about things that need to be changed."

Eliza del Puerto: "I am childless but I have 40,000 children. The children in Basilan suffer the most from this senseless war and they need all the love and help we can give them."

Hadja Bainon Guiabar Karon: "I don't need a monument. I just want people to be empowered, as I am, especially the women and the youth, and assert their rights."

Haydee Yorac: "You should believe in what you are doing and convince all the other people who work with you that what you are doing is important. And then you treat them like human beings, not like automatons."

Irene Morada Santiago: "A just peace is not achievable nor is it sustainable without the energies, dreams, imagination and inspiration of women."

June Caridad Pagaduan-Lopez: "My hope for women is more freedom, more courage to get out of the box, more openness to new ways of looking at themselves."

Loreta Navarro-Castro: "We may not see the results in our lifetime but we must go on believing that someday, that critical mass will be reached and more meaningful change will happen."

Sister Mariani Dimaranan, SFIC: "It is fitting to remember and take to heart that no prison is large enough, or evil strong enough, to stop a people's forward march to freedom."

Marilou Diaz-Abaya: "Filmmakers can moved toward an advocacy for the redemption of human dignity. It is their privilege to reverse the current culture of despair to a culture of hope."

Mary Lou Alcid: "In a globalized economy, will migrants just be a disposable factor to employers? I would like to be optimistic, working for migrant rights."

Miriam Coronel-Ferrer: "Conflicts are best resolved not through annihilation of one party but the transformation of all actors toward a common vision and shared responsibilities and accountability."

Myla Jabiles-Leguro: "Peace education is a must among schools and other institutions. It is as serious as math and science. If we do not give it equal importance, then we are not giving peace importance too."

Piang T. Albar: "I want to educate our people, for education is the best means to transform them for the better. It enhances human understanding and relationships, and strengthens faith and closeness to God."

Pura Sumangil: "If a person is poor, he is not free because he is not given a choice, except for what he has."

Ana Theresia "Risa" Hontiveros-Baraquel: "We have to find another way of engaging in conflict and trying to resolve our conflicts without violating each other."

Seiko Bodios Ohashi: "I will live the rest of my life in Negros because the women, children and men in this island really make my life rich and valuable."

Sister Mary Soledad Perpinan, RGS: "My body is complaining of the hardness of my arthritic knee. Maybe it is my body that absorbed all the pain and brokenness. But my spirit mercifully has not. One does what one believes is right."

Teresa Banaynal Fernandez: "The more difficulties you encounter, the more you are honed and deepened in understanding, in reflecting on the events."

Teresita "Tessy" Ang-See: "Our blood may be Chinese, but our roots grow deep in Philippine soil, our bonds are with the Filipino people."

Teresita "Ging" Quintos-Deles: "Hope is the lifeblood of peace advocacy. We have to make an act of faith every day to overcome all threats to peace so we can become effective peace advocates and peacemakers. We have to stay the course."

Zenaida Brigida "Manang Briggs" Hamada-Pawid: "I speak the memories of the hearts of my people. These pictures of the heart have been orally transmitted from our ancestors. We keep adding what we want to keep, and soon they will be part of lore."

Zenaida "Zeny" Tan Lim: "While, indeed, we have, in our own little way, helped our people chart a beautiful, promising future for ourselves, so much remains to be done."

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

The center must hold

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

IT is always constitutional to protest against government policy, or the government itself, provided the protests are conducted peacefully. It is perfectly constitutional to petition for the president, or any official, to resign. It is perfectly constitutional to demand accountability and express a desire for change because the incumbent has shown himself or herself unfit to continue in office.

There are those who say, the President was elected for six years, and that her mandate hasn't been sufficiently questioned for her to relinquish office. This may be so, if we lived in a country without predatory forces trying to demolish its entire constitutional and social structure. My answer to this is that the normal expectations and assumptions that govern such a point of view have evaporated. Just as the benefit of the doubt given the impeachment trial of Estrada was replaced with convincing proof that Estrada's loyalists weren't interested in even the appearances of a fair trial. The great lie, peddled by Ferdinand Marcos, the militant Left, and the Estrada loyalists, is that there wasn't an iota of idealism, justice, democratic love for liberty and accountability, in the actions of those who trooped to Edsa in 1986 and 2001.

Marcos was resoundingly reminded in 1986, at least, that the middle forces would not be as gullible and cowardly as they were in 1972. Estrada and the senators allied with him were shown that the public would not be a party to their manipulations. That both 1986 and 2001 were followed by less than perfect—in fact, often flawed—compromises in politics and the law, cannot erase the validity of the motivations of those in the center.

If you leave it to the militant Left, we will end up like Cuba—which Crispin Beltran once told me wouldn't be such a bad way to end up, in his opinion. Make no mistake, the kind of Socialism espoused by the National Democratic Front would be that of a China rejected by the Chinese of today, not the prosperous China of today. We would be forced into a Socialist time warp.

If you leave it to the supporters of Joseph Estrada, they, too, would have us enter a kind of time warp due to their theory that regardless of human time, constitutional time can stop, and then be made to start ticking again, the moment their great dream of restoring Estrada to the presidency is accomplished. This is an extreme proposition, one so extreme that it boggles the mind and sickens the stomach.

If you leave it to those proposing a revolutionary government, whether composed entirely of the military, or a motley bunch of military and civilian adventurists, we would again be subjected to a situation where we go back to the Latin America and Indonesia of the 1970s, and most certainly not, as they would hope, the South Korea, Taiwan or Singapore of the past; for having enjoyed liberties and a certain amount of freedoms, our people cannot be forced into a straitjacket. The only ones who would willingly be confined are those farthest from enjoying any potential benefits from a dictatorship. The poor would remain poor, and be more actively oppressed; the middle class would leave; and the extremely wealthy, having run out of qualified managers and supervisors, would devote their resources to businesses and investments abroad.

If you leave things in the hands of the President, you accelerate the possibility of any of the above, and furthermore undermine any chance for the middle forces to prove to themselves, their poorer countrymen and their wealthy employers that—regardless of the compromises we all make—there are certain defining points in our lives and history, when the principles that supposedly govern our relationships with each other are tested.

The country faces such a test now: do we remain paralyzed by fear of change, and thus condemn ourselves to a future defined not by our social contract, but the dogma of Maoists, Estrada apologists or believers in a junta? Or do we face the consequences of our demanding accountability from the President, while risking a succession defined by the rules we ourselves have set?

Unless you want a Maoist Philippines, an Estrada kingdom that time forgot, a country under the heels and the bayonets of the military, or the continuation of the present dispensation under the principle—"After us, the deluge"—that guided the stupid and ineffective aristocrats of 18th-century France, then your choices have been reduced to three.

First, for there to be an impeachment; second, for the President to resign; third, for the Vice President to resign as well, opening up the possibility of an election. The first has many advocates among those pushing for the rule of law, as if the other two weren't legal options. The second appeals to the duty of a leader, however discredited, to salvage his or her standing before history and to ease the great stresses being felt by our citizenry and our institutions. The third is a great gamble, considering how there are contending forces trying to overturn the existing constitutional order.

Again, I must appeal: if we in the middle feel bound by the Constitution, realize then, that neither the militant Left, nor the Estrada forces, nor even military adventurers feel bound by it. If we're shackled to each other by the chains of constitutionalism, then those chains must be our strongest weapon of self-defense. A consensus, as I said, is what we need, and we don't have the luxury of disunity and time. The center must hold together. It must do so by holding fast to its ideals, and not fall prey to a fatal pragmatism. On trial is the ability of the middle class to save itself by living up to its values.

Three is family

YOUNG BLOOD

Jaymee Lim

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

AS a child, my perspective of life was picture perfect. I kept a portrait of a happy family in my mind and I had illusions about being happy. But the truth is that my childhood was close to being hell. Later in my life, I would realize that all these fantasies were castles in the sky, a figment of my young imagination.

I was about 4 years old, the time in a person's life when one just starts to understand important events in life, when I started to have my fantasies. I would go to school full of enthusiasm, ready with my wonderful "happy family" stories because I knew that while we ate biscuits and drank milk during recess, my classmates would be telling stories about the perfect lives they were living. I started fabricating tales, like going to church on Sunday mornings after breakfast at McDonald's, watching a very funny cartoon movie at the mall and having a doting, hardworking father guiding me through life.

I was having daydreams even as I was living a nightmare. Instead of fun times at the mall, I heard screams and the sounds of breaking glass and wrecked appliances. Instead of the affectionate father of my imagination, my real father was hot-headed (with his breath reeking of alcohol) and unemployed.

It was not that opportunities didn't come his way; he was just lazy and egotistical. He frequently fought with his bosses and wouldn't go to work for the flimsiest of reasons like having a common cold. He made promises—no more alcohol and no more violence—and never kept them. He would mellow for a period of time and become an ideal parent, and then go back to his old ways.

It was Mom who carried the burden of raising their two kids. She had to accept a night-time job at a casino. I felt so lonely every night when she would go to work and I would just cry myself to sleep.

One night when I was 7 , I wanted to go with her. I tagged along as Dad drove her to work. He was furious that I went along since it would make it difficult for him to join his beer buddies.

The moment Mom alighted from the car, Dad glared at me, his eyes blazing with rage and resentment. He stepped on the gas and sped away. He made some very sharp turns and more than once almost collided with other vehicles. He was driving like a lunatic. All I could do was hang on to my seat and pray that I would survive the ordeal.

When he finally brought the car to a screeching halt, I was relieved to find myself still in one piece. It was dark outside, and all I could make out was the shadow cast by a street post. I dared not ask Dad where in the world we were.

Dad got out, and banged the doors shut and locked them, with me still inside the car. He left and I waited. I kept repeating a silent prayer. I asked God to keep me company and to please let no one smash the windshield, and to please let no one abduct me and to please bring me home! I made promises that only kids could make: I won't take my classmate Sam's eraser ever again. I won't break Heather's barrette ever again. I won't ever pull Yaya Flor's half-slip down again. I have lost count of how many promises I made that night!

After what seemed like forever, there was still no trace of Dad. I was sweating inside the car. I started feeling wobbly and was about to faint. Finally, I decided to get out and look for him.

I followed a path leading to a small house. When I entered, I was greeted by the boisterous laughter and garbled speech of Dad and his drinking buddies. When Dad saw me, he acted like he didn't know me at all.

My memories of that night stopped right there. I can't remember what happened after that. What I do recollect was the disgust that welled up inside me. That night I made a vow never to forgive my father. I despised Dad totally.

After that, Mom and Dad engaged in more brawls that made our family life even more miserable. Mom, my sister and I shut him out of our lives. We planned our future and set goals to fulfill our rather simple dreams. We just wanted a place for ourselves and some quiet in our lives. Mom quit her job and joined her siblings in their family business. She worked hard to provide enough for each one of us and gave us everything we needed. She became our superhero.

Soon after graduation, my sister and I found decent jobs and achieved some success in our chosen fields. Dad, on the other hand, turned worse. Living at home became an ordeal.

One day, Mom told us that she could sense that Dad was seeing another woman. We investigated and her intuition proved to be right. We decided to put an end to our misery.

Mom told us that we must forgive her for what she would do since no man from an upright family would marry a girl coming from a broken family. My sister and I just hung on to our belief that in love, family background would not matter. If our boyfriends couldn't accept our family, then we would be better off without them. Anyway, we had each other and that was all that mattered.

Brutal as it may sound, we kicked Dad out of our house. But the day he moved out was the first time I felt serenity after a very long time.

Yes, he is still my father and there is no doubt that I do feel affection for him, no matter how resentful I am. My love for him cannot be blotted out by time. Yet, I feel no remorse for everything that happened. We had to do it to maintain our sanity.

Now I no longer dread coming home. What we have is not even close to the ideal family I had in my mind as a child. I learned the hard way that to be happy doesn't mean conforming with the norms set by society. Having all the components of a family does not make it one. Our family can be only us three.

Jaymee Lim, 26 is an assistant manager for marketing of a big supermarket chain.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

GMA needs a spiritual retreat

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo took 22 days before she could say her piece on the controversial "Hello Garci" tapes. Her well-crafted statement of apology was a disappointment. It wasn't worth the long wait. It was utterly devoid of spontaneity and candidness. traits that normally show innocence and sincerity. It did not come from the heart.

GMA can fool some Filipinos sometimes, but she cannot fool all the Filipinos all the time. In short, she did not tell us the truth. With her hypocrisy and deception now exposed, can she hold on to the highest office (which does not truly belong to her)? Can we still believe her when she promises us that she will double her efforts? After all, what efforts is she talking about? Under her presidency our country has become the second most corrupt nation in Asia (some say, in the whole world); *jueteng* has become rampant more than ever; the condition of the poor has turned from bad to worse; and the most despicable of all, whatever little faith we still have in the Commission on Elections has been completely lost. She has embarrassed the country enough as well as the office of the presidency. By now, her presidency is beyond redemption.

I pity the young people in our country. According to the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, the presidency was an occasion for Erap to commit sin. Maybe, his lack of higher learning was partly to be blamed for his bad governance. GMA, on the other hand, with her degree in economics, was supposed to rekindle our flickering hopes of a brighter future. Alas, the opposite has happened. She has extinguished completely that hope. *Sino pa ang titingalain ng mga kabataan ngayon* (Who would the young look up to now)?

But not everything is lost for her. She can still redeem her soul and her name. As a priest, I would like to ask her to stay away from her legal advisers for a while and instead spend some days in spiritual retreat, so that she can truly pray, sincerely examine her conscience and make a humble sacramental confession.

She has invited us to a journey with her. But this is the kind of journey that you and I can walk with her—a journey with God. It is a journey of prayer, of listening to God's redeeming words, of personal introspection leading to a sincere and humble contrition of the heart, of making resolute amendment of her life and ways (this includes restoration of things she probably has stolen from others), and of walking in the path of transforming penance.

I believe in the power of God's grace. It was the same grace that made the sinful, immoral and lost Augustine to become the great St. Augustine we venerate today. Doubtless, that the same grace will give GMA the courage to make the best decision yet of her life—the decision to be more statesmanlike, more Christian, more dignified and honorable, and more self-sacrificing for the best interest of the country we all love.

—MSGR. JERRY V. BITOON,
parish priest,
Sto. Sepulcro Parish,
Landayan, San Pedro, Laguna

Inspiring stories from inside prison

THERE are many lessons to be learned from the stories of more than 240 political prisoners in the Philippines. Theirs are inspiring stories. Eduardo Serrano's story tells us a fundamental truth that cannot be restrained by prison walls—that is, when you help others, you are never alone.

What makes Serrano's story specifically powerful is that even inside prison, he continues to nourish his devotion—to serve the people. He provides acupuncture service to fellow inmates and their relatives. So in demand is he that even jail guards and the jail warden come to him for acupuncture treatment, as it saves them from the high cost of medicine for simple ailments.

In detention for more than one year now at the Oriental Mindoro Provincial Jail (OMPJ) in Calapan City, Serrano is accused of crimes. What crimes? Fighting with kin and friends who would not let the truth die with them and for the masses who raised their fist to fight for their rights. His crimes are that he defended the oppressed and sacrificed for others.

Serrano's case and those of other political dissenters are grim reminders of the repression and injustice paradoxically happening beneath the purported civility of our modern society. But more than this, that there are more than 240 political prisoners in the country speaks deeply of our tragedy, showing the world that we have a democracy that thrives on sheer lies.

The military itself claims Serrano is a "prized catch." Government is wrong to say that his capture will cripple the insurgency problem in Mindoro. The insurgency will survive for the simple reason that it speaks deeply of our tragedy—we are stuck in a quagmire of poverty. And poverty is the root cause of insurgency.

The meaning of democracy now in the country calls upon us to contemplate only of our misery. There is not a situation more ironic than one where we find men and women of conviction, who fought for social change, languishing in jails. Listen to the cries of the wounded. Justice for all victims of political repression! Free all political prisoners.

—JERBERT M. BRIOLA,
regional coordinator, Task Force
Detainees of the Philippines-
Southern Luzon, 29 S. Osmeña St.,
Barangay Uno, Lucena City

Recall of bodyguards applied to one and all

THIS is to correct some errors in Ramon Tulfo's column titled "Abu sacked for arrogance." (PDI, 6/25/05)

Gen. Efren Abu was not "sacked." On the contrary, although he had reached the mandatory retirement age of 56 last June 24, 2005, the President extended his tenure in office until Aug. 15, 2005. That in itself is a clear indication of GMA's continuing trust and confidence in Abu.

On the recall of military bodyguards assigned to a "private individual," that was done in accordance with the many reform policies being implemented by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, specifically DND Circular No. 2 dated March 12, 2003. It is in line with our aim of professionalizing the AFP and maximizing the use of the AFP's resources in order to accomplish its core missions.

The "unpopular" policy is strictly applied in all cases, including those affecting civilian government officials and private individuals. Tulfo, the "private individual" referred to in his own article, is not exempted from this policy.

While the AFP respects the right of Tulfo to free expression, it cannot allow the people to be provided with untruthful information about their Armed Forces and its actions.

—LT. COL. BUENAVENTURA
C. PASCUAL (GSC) PA,
chief, Public Information Office,
Armed Forces of the Philippines,
Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

Senator Santiago clarifies position on two matters

1. CONRADO de Quiros says that it was a "monumental irony" that Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago who lost the presidential election in 1992 and railed bitterly at the cheating done to (her) is "now defending, or ignoring, a breathtaking case of it with breathtaking ease." He also lambasted the senator for failing to grasp the "atrocious meaning" of the conversations between the President and Virgilio Garcillano. (PDI, 6/30/05)

Far from ignoring the allegations of cheating, Santiago called for the playing of the "Hello Garci" tape "so that the people can judge for themselves" the truth of the charges against GMA. Her view that there was nothing criminal in the conversations was based on the transcripts of the conversations published by the INQUIRER and on the constitutional presumption of innocence until an accused is proven guilty.

As a lawyer, law professor, former judge and constitutionalist, she strongly advocates that we let our democratic processes aid us in arriving at the truth, instead of resorting to extra-constitutional means that would only serve to further divide our people. When she was cheated in the 1992 presidential election, she did not call for the people to take to the streets and force President Ramos out of Malacañang. She resorted to constitutional means—she filed an electoral protest.

2. On Victor Agustin's column, "UP clears 'suicide' committee," (PDI, 6/29/05) Santiago has sent a letter to the UP administration asking that—for justice to be rendered and to deter similar case of abuse in the future—the University Council be tasked to determine whether or not harassment and improprieties attended Alexander Robert Santiago's interview for admission into the UP College of Law.

The UP College of Law can never be truly impartial on the issue: First, UP Law dean Raul Pangalangan is the spouse of one of the interviewers of Alexander; second, the members of the committee are handpicked by Pangalangan; third, the chair of the committee is Araceli Baviera, a retired law professor whose appointment in the college is renewed every semester by Pangalangan; and fourth, the other members are mere part-time lecturers who have no supervision over the members of the law admissions committee.

The Baviera committee declared that "Alexander was interviewed not with an uneven hand nor cruelty but only in a manner consistent with our public duties as teachers." The fact is that there were only two parties present during the interview—the interviewee, now dead and to forever remain silent, and the interviewers who have chosen to band together in a conspiracy of silence as to what actually transpired during the interview.

—FATIMA LIPP D. PANONTONGAN,
Office of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago,
mdsmediabureau@yahoo.com

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Senate urged to probe coal plants

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The international environmental group Greenpeace has called on the Senate and other government agencies to resume investigating alleged hazardous emissions of coal plants in the country.

The group also asked that the investigation include coal-fired plants in Toledo City and Naga town in Cebu amid growing global concerns on the impact of coal emissions on climate change.

Red Constantino, Greenpeace energy campaigner for Southeast Asia, told a news conference yesterday that the investigation should be resumed based on findings by the group that the plants emit toxic substances.

He said Senators Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sergio Osmeña III had expressed interest in pursuing the investigation.

In 2002, the Senate committee on environmental and natural resources then chaired by former Sen. Robert Jaworski investigated allegations of emissions of mercury and other toxic substances from coal plants in Luzon.

These include the 1,200-megawatt station in Sual, Pangasinan; the 440-mw plant in Mauban, Quezon; the 700-mw station in Pagbilao, Quezon; the 700-mw station in Oyon, Zambales; and the 600-mw plant in Calaca, Batangas.

Mirant public affairs manager Greggy Romualdez said his firm was willing to participate in any investigation concerning their plants.

He said an investigation would be an opportunity to "discuss and showcase" Mirant's track record that showed they had complied with environmental standards and rules.

A report of the Greenpeace released last May alleged that two coal plants in Cebu operated by Mirant and the Korean Electric Power Co. (Kepco) emitted toxic substances.

Romualdez belied the claims of Greenpeace, saying quarterly reports of multipartite monitoring teams (MTTs) consistently showed that its plants were environmentally safe.

He said the MTTs were composed of representatives of local government units, non-government organizations and Mirant.

Copies of the quarterly reports were submitted to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources as part of the conditions of the Environmental Compliance Certificate issued to the power firm, he added.

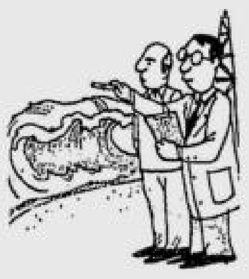
Mirant plans to add a 220-mw plant to the existing 75-mw plant in Toledo City. Kepco, on the other hand, plans to put up a 200-mw plant in addition to the existing 110-mw plant in Naga.

Mirant also plans to put up a 100-mw coal plant in Barotac Viejo town, about 64 km north of Iloilo City. A similar project is being planned in Concepcion town, about 111 km north of Iloilo City, by David Consunji Inc. (DMCI).

The projects in Iloilo are being backed by Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. and officials of the two municipalities.

ROUNDUP

Hazard study in coasts



COTABATO CITY—The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) in South-Central Mindanao will conduct a hazard assessment study to prevent a possible tsunami tragedy in the coastal areas in the region. Minda Morante, OCD regional executive officer, said her office would conduct the study in Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos City. "There is a ... need for an early warning device system. It is really costly, but if the three concerned local government units pool their funds, it will become affordable," Morante said in a statement. In 1976, about 3,000 people died and 12,000 families lost their homes when giant waves hit Lebak, Linek, and Kalamansig towns in Sultan Kudarat. *Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Clash alarms police

OZAMIZ CITY—Policemen and soldiers clashed with communist rebels near the town hall of Tudela in Misamis Occidental Friday. Although there was no casualty, the clash alarmed police officials. Chief Insp. Marion Quimno, provincial police operations officer, said NPA rebels were seen in the area prior to the clash. The clash came in the wake of an NPA warning of more offensives against the government: *Ryan Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

5 hurt in escape try

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—At least five persons were hurt when two inmates at the provincial jail here held hostage a woman guard in an attempt to escape Sunday. Dominador Tagarda, acting jail warden, said the hostage-taking lasted for three minutes after Azucena Barte, the guard, disarmed Lorenzo Caberto Jr. who threatened to stab her with a 12-inch icepick in the neck. The other guards shot and wounded inmates Caberto and Jonathan Dagandang. Two other civilians were injured. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Drowning in Boracay

ILOILO CITY—A Filipino tourist vacationing on Boracay Island in Aklan drowned while swimming in the waters of the popular island-resort on Monday. Warren Redoñes, 31, died at about 10 a.m. at the Boracay Municipal Hospital, some 30 minutes after he was taken to the medical facility, according to a report of the Boracay Special Protection Unit (BSPU). PO1 Larry James Vidal said Redoñes was swimming with friends at the beach in front of the Dalisay Resort and Restaurant in Barangay Manoc-Manoc where he was billeted when he was seen floating in the water. *Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

Fil-Chinese honored

CANDELARIA, Quezon—A local Filipino-Chinese businessman has been chosen the 2005 Dr. Jose Rizal Memorial Lifetime Achievement awardee for excellence in business and entrepreneurship. As regional director of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc., Roberto Licup has built and donated school sites in various parts of Quezon province and donated computer units to various schools and colleges in the province. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Police nab fishermen

GUMACA, Quezon—Thirty fishermen suspected of illegally operating in Lamon Bay were arrested last week by the seaborne patrol unit of the 404th Maritime Police, the chief of the regional maritime police said in a report. Supt. Remberto Cataluna, OIC regional director of PNP Maritime-Southern Tagalog Region based in Barangay Dalahican, said they also recovered nine fishing boats and illegal fishing paraphernalia. Cataluna said the patrol unit also discovered 3,000 abandoned square lauan logs along a river bank in Barangay Sto. Angelo in Mauban town. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Driver held up

SIGURADO AKONG MERO SILANG DALAWANG MATA. ILONG AT BIBIG !

SARIAYA, Quezon—A naked tricycle driver showed up at the police station here on Wednesday last week and filed a complaint against two unidentified persons who robbed him of clothes, cash and jewelry and also his vehicle. Erickson Robleza, 18, a resident of Purok Pagkakaisa, Lucena City, told the police that at around 10 p.m., the suspects contracted him in Lucena to bring them to Sariaya. But before they entered Sariaya, the suspects ordered him to turn the vehicle to a dimly lit feeder road where he was stripped of his personal belongings, including his clothes, shoes and underwear.
Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Pampanga governor says quarry income reaches ₱19.8M this year

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The provincial government reported grossing P19.815 million in revenues from the sand industry on the heels of controversies attending its collection system.

Provincial administrator Fidel Arcenas told the INQUIRER that the increase in revenues, which were nearly double the P10.530 million in 2004, was due to efficiency in collections and monitoring work by the provincial quarry task force.

Arcenas, who is task force vice chair, could not say how many truckloads of sand were taxed, how much volume was hauled out of Pampanga and from which towns the sand was quarried.

The answers to those were the bases of determining the revenue shares of sand-rich towns and barangays. Local officials had complained to Gov. Mark Lapid about the lack of information on those details. Arcenas said he would release the information next week.

Capitol collects P300 for every truckload. Half of the amount goes to capitol's administrative and service fee. Of the remaining amount, the provincial government and the towns get 30 percent each. Villages get 40 percent.

Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao said the capitol's collections were still way below those of the state-owned Natural Resources Development Corp.

The provincial government grossed P145.2 million in 1999, P132 million in 2000 and P104 million in 2001.

The same amount was also low compared to the P100 million the NRDC proposed to draw if allowed to be the collecting arm of the capitol.

The NRDC, the corporate arm of the environment department, took over the management of the sand industry in February 1999 on orders of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

It lost control on the orders of the regional trial court that upheld the right of the provincial government to collect taxes imposed on the extraction and hauling of Mt. Pinatubo's sand. Its proposal, offered in January this year, was rejected by Lapid and the provincial board.

"At the rate the collections were coming, it's highly unlikely that capitol can match NRDC's amount," Guiao said.

Lapid had set a net revenue of P30 million this year.

A report obtained from the office of provincial treasurer Vergel Yabut showed that quarry collections had reached more than P4 million monthly since April compared to only P1.14 million last January.

In April, the natural resources and good government committees of the House of Representatives began investigating the drastic drop in collections and the alleged anomalies occurring during the last term of then Gov. Manuel "Lito" Lapid.

A statement released by the capitol said Governor Lapid had ordered an investigation into the use of alleged fake receipts.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Aurora villagers flee homes as 'Emong' hits

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Fearing another round of landslides, at least 100 families in Dingalan, Aurora, fled to higher grounds on Tuesday as rains brought by tropical depression "Emong" hit the town, according to officials.

Dingalan Councilor Shiela Taay said residents of Barangay Paltic sought refuge in houses of relatives or went to the Dingalan Bay Resort.

Insp. Almario Evaristo, the town's police chief, said the residents panicked.

"They have developed phobia," Evaristo said, referring to the landslides and flash floods that struck Dingalan in November last year.

At least 136 people, mostly children, died while more than 140 others were hurt in the flooding. The worst hit villages were Paltic and Umiray.

Evaristo said the residents returned to their houses on Wednesday when the rains stopped.

Also on Tuesday, the Dingalan River overflowed and stranded many students, Taay said.

The Department of Public Works and Highways asked motorists to skirt the Baler (Aurora)-Bongabon (Nueva Ecija) Road as the route is landslide prone.

Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, head of the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council in Central Luzon, said they did not receive reports of drowning, floods and damage to public structures in six other provinces in the region.

In Bulacan, "Emong's" rains raised the water level at the Angat Dam reservoir by about 4 meters, reports from the provincial disaster coordinating council (PDCC) showed.

The water level at the dam was 171.99 meters, which was higher than the 167.9 meters recorded on Tuesday, the PDCC said.

Tonette Orejas and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Nemesio de la Cruz, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

MMDA strikes deal with veggie dealers

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Vegetable dealers here can now freely drive their trucks into Metro Manila's public markets without fear of being mulcted by policemen or being arrested for truck ban and color coding violations.

Mayor Nestor Fongwan said the Metro Manila Development Authority recently granted the dealers' request that they be exempted from the truck ban and color coding schemes that had delayed the delivery of vegetables from Benguet farms.

Fongwan also said officials of the Philippine National Police had assured him that they would stop policemen, assigned in various checkpoints along the route to Metro Manila, from extorting money from drivers.

He said the food lane stickers put on 17 vegetable trucks belonging to the Benguet Traders and Truckers Association (BTTA) would exempt the trucks from the color coding and truck ban regulations once they entered the metropolis.

"Metro Manila's markets are now assured of a steady and fast supply of highland vegetables since trading will go on smoothly," he said.

Last month, Benito Hipolito, BTTA president, told Vice President Noli de Castro that law enforcers in at least eight checkpoints along the route to Metro Manila flag down vegetable trucks and ask their drivers "fees" before they are allowed to ply their route.

Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Woman dies as wall collapses on home

BACOLOD CITY—A manicurist was killed while her husband and daughter were injured early Tuesday when a concrete wall collapsed and fell on their house in Purok Langis, Barangay Banago here.

SPO3 Carmelo Nermal said Jocelyn Enima, 42, died on the spot after she was hit by a steel bar. Her neck was broken and she suffered injuries in the head, he added.

Her husband, Joemarie, 30 and her 13-year-old daughter, Gayne, were brought to the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Regional Hospital for treatment of injuries.

Nermal said Enimas' neighbors told the police that the 12 feet concrete wall fencing the house of Romulo Itaas collapsed and hit the Enimases' home at about 1:45 a.m.

About that time, Joemarie was suffering from a stomachache. He was waking up his wife to ask for medicines when he heard a strange sound similar to a falling heavy object, said Nermal.

When Joemarie went outside to check, he saw the wall collapsing, the police investigator said. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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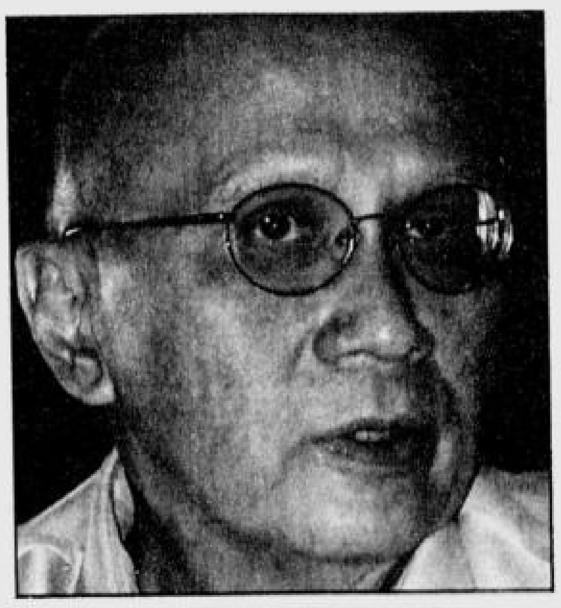

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Mangyan folk want own curriculum

By Madonna T. Virola
City of Calapan

EVERY year, before classes start in June, Ason Hundoy, a Hanunuo-Mangyan, crosses a river 16 times, passes through a ravine, and hangs on to vines to reach an elementary school in the Iraya-Mangyan community in Sitio Inabasan, San Teodoro town in Oriental Mindoro.

It is a seven-hour walk from the town proper, which is an hour's ride from the capital city of Calapan, to Inabasan, where Hundoy teaches 42 Mangyan pupils aged 7-18 years old.

Hundoy finds the long trek difficult, especially during rainy days when the river swells. "But what is nice is that the community folk would fetch us," she said.

On April 6, the river was neck-deep and she had to be carried by community leader Eder Pelegrino on his shoulders.

Her school is one of two Mangyan elementary schools (Grades 1 to 3) in the province where the Mangyan Mission (MM) started piloting an indigenous curriculum in September 2003, a year after its nonformal education program was implemented. The Church-based organization helps the natives in various aspects of their life and culture.

The other school is located in the Bangon community in Sitio Naswak, Bongabong town, a two-hour walk from the main road. Nelsie Moten and Amay Rodolfo, 28, handle the Grades 2 and 3 classes, comprising 85 learners.

Happy

Another teacher in Inabasan, Alangan-Mangyan Samuel Orfrecio, was offered a teaching post in the Tugdaan Mangyan School in Naujan town, but he said he felt that his services were needed more in the interior village. He is the son of Akingan Kose, a former chair of Barangay Paitan.

"I am happy to have experienced that my tribe shares similarities with the Iraya tribe, like the *sabet*. It means that when someone sneezes, you take a pause or there will be an accident," Orfrecio said.

According to the MM, the acculturated curriculum has been successfully piloted in the two Mangyan schools. As a result, the Department of Education has approved the indigenous curriculum's integration in its primary education program in Mindoro.

"The DepEd is cooperative," Fr. Ewald Dinter, MM director, said.

Under the present practice in Mangyan schools in Mindoro and elsewhere in the country, the learners go to schools. "But in this one, whose name will be coined by the Mangyans, the teachers, who are Mangyans, go to far-flung communities, enabling a natural learning space at the primary level and accommodating both children and adults," said Nemia Gareza, coordinator of the MM education program.

"The objective of the Mangyan indigenous schools is to facilitate [the] emergence of a Mangyan indigenous educational system which strengthens and enriches their indigenous culture, protects their ancestral domain, and promotes self-determination and, at the same time, provides them opportunities to learn appropriate lowland knowledge and skills," the program's concept paper stated.

THE ENTIRE community serves as the "classroom" in a remote Mangyan village in San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Since the Mangyan learners are already old for primary education, placements tests adapted from the DepEd's Basic and Functional Literacy Evaluation are conducted before the start of classes to determine their grade levels.

Community based

Gareza said the proposed curriculum was functional, interactive, creative, participatory, liberating and empowering. It is patterned after the concept of Brazilian educator Paolo Freire, who is known for his book "Pedagogy of the Oppressed."

The Mangyan curriculum has four core subjects: Language (Filipino and English), Science, Math and Social Studies and Culture.

Each core subject has different sub-fields: Language—reading and writing; Mathematics—practical mathematics, measurement and simple geometry; Science—ecosystem, health and sanitation, agriculture and technology; Social Studies—Philippine society, geography, Mangyan tribe, music and arts, values education and the world.

Other subjects, which are not graded, are agriculture, physical education and music.

"There was no grading system before, but since parents are also looking for it, and in the meantime that we've not found an alternative grading system, we're adopting the grades," Gareza said.

Learning contents include customary laws, history, beliefs and practices, literature, music/dances, arts and crafts, games/plays, and domain.

Learnings

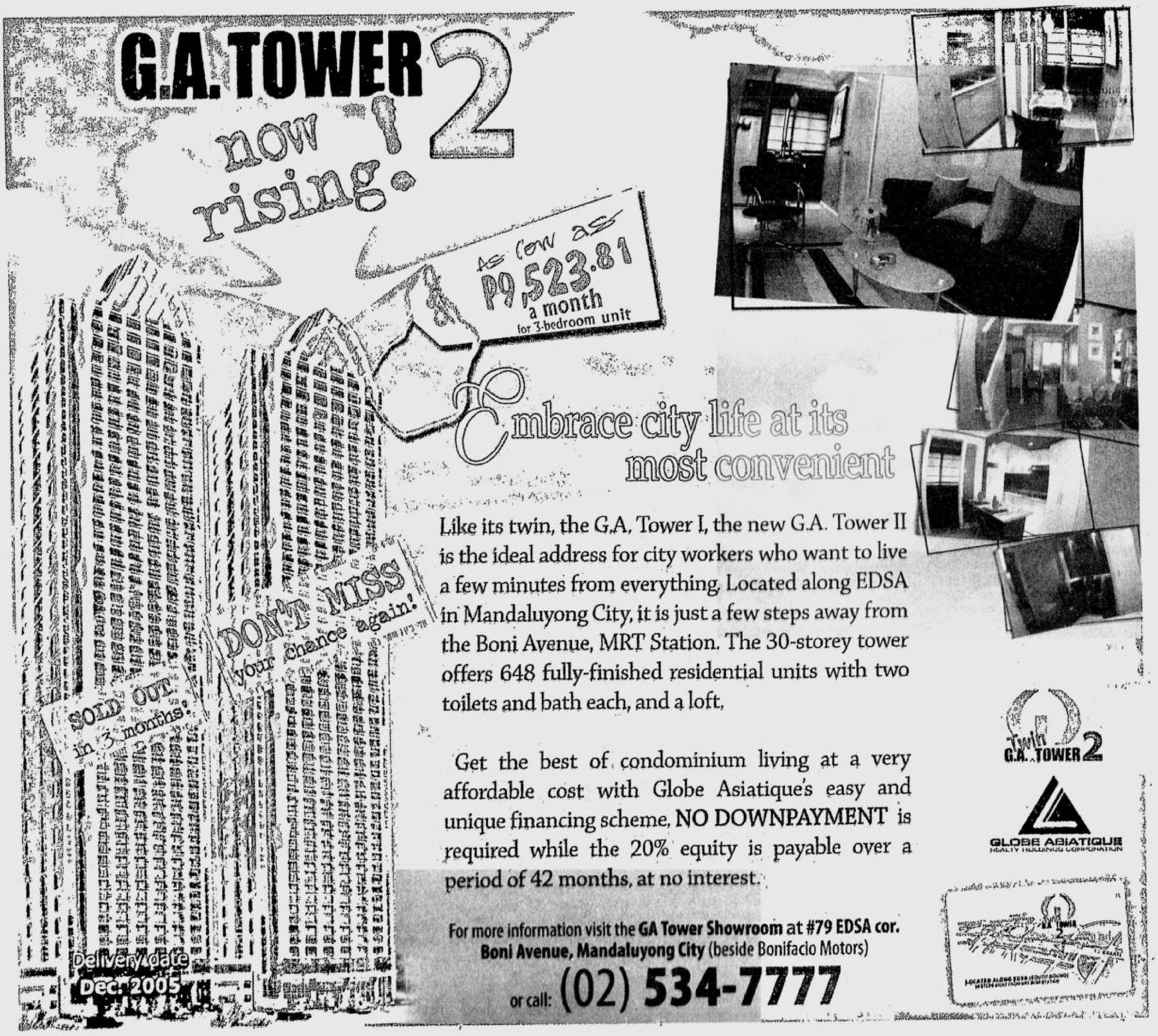
Gareza said modules were being developed based on research and experimentation done from 2003 to 2005. She cited the following lessons:

- Strategies should vary and learners should be active through various activities and not only looking at the teacher and confined in the classroom.
- Community-based schooling, meaning the community is a learning space, not separate from school. While other tribal schools totally confine themselves to non-Mangyan education, the MM believes the Mangyan should not be deprived of useful lowland education like counting, physics and chemistry.
- Learning is not separate from the Mangyan context. For instance, every Friday, absences among adults are understood because it is the day of harvest for market day on Saturday, when non-Mangyans come to buy Mangyan products and sell their products as well. But on Monday, they submit an essay relating their experiences, like how much they were able to sell of their products.
- The schedule of classes is also June to March, following their agricultural calendar. Their special holiday is observed, like Bangon's founding anniversary where the tribal assembly is held. There are no classes during harvest period. During the Holy Week, they have classes, except for Good Friday, in consideration of the non-Mangyan teacher.

Gareza explained that the subjects were not compartmentalized but connected on four levels—family, community, tribe and Philippine society.

For instance, in discussing an ancestral land, stories about it are tackled in English class, its measurement in Math, and the issue is connected with the Philippine situation in Social Studies.

The pilot program will be expanded to cover Grade 6 classes. "The MM is part of the education cluster and executive committee of the Programang Pang-edukasyon sa Kalibliban of the provincial government.



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61% favor life without Gloria

From page A1

Arroyo did not win the last presidential election," outnumbering those who believe otherwise (22 percent).

Miranda noted that a combined 44 percent of respondents believed that her stay in office was as bad as having a coup d'etat where the military and police would either rule or pick out the civilian politicians that would lead the country.

These findings run counter to the claim of Ms Arroyo that most Filipinos still support her.

"She (Ms Arroyo) remains firm in her belief that the majority of the people prefer for her to get over the hump," said Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago amid calls for the President to step down because of allegations that she cheated in last year's elections and that her family received huge payoffs from operators of "jueteng," an illegal numbers game.

Unprecedentedly high

Pulse Asia said the "Jueteng-gate" and "Gloriagate tape" scandals had taken their toll on Ms Arroyo with her trust and approval ratings plunging to record lows.

"Cutting the Arroyo administration and its lead authorities down to size has never been as catholic as now. The sitting President's trust ratings are at their lowest levels in all geographic areas and across all socioeconomic classes since she assumed the presidency,"

Pulse Asia described the President's 46 percent disapproval rating as "unprecedentedly high" and her distrust rating (53 percent) "record breaking."

The President's distrust rating was so bad that only her husband, son and brother-in-law (all of whom were accused of getting jueteng payola) had worse marks (at least 60 percent) and her phone pal, former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, slightly better with 50 percent.

But Malacañang quickly shrugged off the Pulse Asia survey results as expected in the face of the twin scandals hounding the administration.

"One thing we have to remember about the surveys is that these reflect the public's perception and not necessarily the truth," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

"We are confident that in due time, it will be clear to the public that the President did not cheat and that her family is not involved in jueteng," Bunye said.

Change imperative

Miranda said the respondents "appear clear on one thing: things have to change one way or another and the country's political leadership itself cannot be spared from this coming change."

Contrary to Malacañang's declaration, only a minority of Filipinos believe that the best alternative for the country was for Ms Arroyo to remain in office.

The survey showed that 22 percent reckoned that a full term for the President was in the best interest of the country while 16 percent said she should stay but only until a parliamentary form of government is in place by 2010.

The survey showed that 64 percent Filipinos believed that high government officials were involved in jueteng and an even bigger majority (78 percent) thought that the First Family members were coddling jueteng lords.

Pulse Asia said that even before her admission, more than half of the respondents believed the President was on the Gloriagate tape in which she talked to Garcillano and that close to a majority of respondents felt that the President should step down with only 26 percent disagreeing.

3 leaders rated

Filipinos rated three individuals Vice President Noli de Castro (30 percent), Estrada (19 percent) and opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson (16 percent) as "better leaders available to replace her."

"As to being replaced by Noli, Erap or Lacson, the public must again remember that the President is the duly elected President and that absent irrefutable proof of wrongdoing, there is no reason for her to be replaced," Bunye said.

Erap's resurrection

The survey showed that 42 percent of the respondents believe the President was an "unacceptable leader" ahead of former President Fidel V. Ramos (39 percent) and former presidential candidate Eddie Villanueva (31 percent).

The Pulse Asia survey showed that 30 percent of respondents believed Estrada should be reinstalled if Malacañang became vacant; 7 percent wanted him as a transition president until a new one is installed; and 3 percent saw him as the overall leader of all political groups opposing the government.

In a one-on-one matchup between Ms Arroyo and Estrada, 42 percent felt the former actor was more trustworthy than the economist (26 percent).

At least 57 percent of Filipinos believe that Estrada did better than Ms Arroyo in terms of controlling inflation, reducing poverty, and fighting corruption, managing the budget, and minimizing jueteng and other illegal gambling operations.

"For mostly every one, an unprecedented sense of deterioration (of being a "loser") in their quality of life over the past year combines with an equally unprecedented sense of pessimism for the coming year," Miranda said.

The Pulse Asia survey was commissioned by "a principal closely identified with the political opposition" which Miranda pointed out has in "no way compromises the academic integrity of the survey."

It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

Kabayan hails survey results

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE CAMP of Vice President Noli de Castro yesterday hailed the latest Pulse Asia survey showing most Filipinos were in favor of De Castro assuming the presidency in case President Macapagal-Arroyo resigned or was impeached.

"We are pleased that the people have reaffirmed their trust and confidence in the competence of the Vice President as a national leader. We are also happy that Filipinos are aware and are fully supportive of the Constitution, due process and the rule of law," Jessie Andres, De Castro's chief of staff and spokesperson, said.

In an interview, Andres said this sentiment would further inspire the Vice President to serve the Filipino people.

"The Vice President reassures everyone that he would continue to maintain and uphold the integrity of his public office and the mandate you have given him," Andres said.

De Castro left for Hong Kong yesterday with family members to celebrate his 56th birthday. He will be back today.

Garcillano affidavit clears President; foes decry diversion

From page A1

the wiretap. He disappeared from public view two weeks ago. Opposition elements have suggested Garcillano was being held hostage by administration supporters and that his life was in danger.

Yesterday, the lawmaker released to the Inquirer a two-page affidavit declaring that Ms Arroyo "did not order me to rig the electoral process." The affidavit is to be notarized today.

"It is highly illogical for me to pad her votes or shave the votes of her opponent when at those times when she allegedly called me up, all the certificates of canvass were already submitted to the Congress," the affidavit said.

Garcillano later yesterday talked to the Inquirer again by telephone to confirm he had prepared the document in Bukidnon. He sounded in an upbeat mood.

The affidavit included Akbayan partylist Rep. Etta Rosales and former Sen. John Osmena, in addition to the others he said he talked with in the Tuesday's interview. They were Escudero, vice presidential candidate Loren Legarda and Sens. Mar Roxas, Jamby Madrigal and Robert Barbers.

Garcillano stressed they did not seek favors from him but simply expressed concern about possible fraud.

"Aside from telephone calls made by candidates, others requested for either breakfast, lunch or dinner dates to discuss how to protect their votes or that of their candidates during the election," the document said.

Garcillano rejected opposition contentions that the recording showed he assured Ms Arroyo a one million vote margin. He said this particular portion of the conversation was "doctored."

Escudero said the tapes submitted by Alan Paguia, former counsel for deposed President Joseph Estrada, and played before a House panel investigating the wiretap on Tuesday did not bear out claims Garcillano talked with the opposition.

Administration lawmakers said the opposition should explain their dealings with Garcillano.

House Majority Leader Prospero C. Nograles and Representatives Eduardo C. Zialcita of Parañaque and Marcelino C. Libanan of Eastern Samar said members of the opposition should emulate Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, who admitted to calling Comelec officials during last year's elections.

Double standard

"They have been asking the President to explain her conversation with Commissioner Garcillano when they themselves have communicated with the election officer," Nograles said.

Zialcita said Ms Arroyo's opponents owed the public an explanation for their "apparent double standard on the legality of coming into any form of contact with election officers during an election period."

"Why didn't they reveal this before? They contend that calling or talking to a Comelec official during the election period is illegal. They owe the public an explanation in light of Garcillano's statement," he said.

"Garcillano's revelation would be damning for him and the rest of his party mates who had kept mum about this," Libanan said.

"At least the President had the guts to admit a lapse in judgment in talking to an election official but they are far worse considering that they did not even divulge their communication with Comelec officials and are persecuting her for this," he added.

During yesterday's joint investigation on the "Gloriagate" tapes, the five House committees decided to subpoena Garcillano after he talked to the INQUIRER.

Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr., chair of the investigation, said that the lawmakers wanted to hear Garcillano's testimony since he had already allowed himself to be interviewed by the media.

Tatad source of Paguia tape

Ilocos Sur. Rep. Salacnib Baterina, an administration lawmaker, withdrew his opposition to having Garcillano subpoenaed after reading the INQUIRER report. He had the report marked as evidence.

Locsin said Garcillano should appear and that he could not dictate on the committee when he would do so.

"A witness does not choose the time of his own appearance. We are not going to wait for his convenience," Locsin said.

The committees also summoned former Sen. Francisco Tatad after Paguia admitted that Tatad was the source of his versions of the tapes. Tatad admitted this in an interview with Time Magazine. Paguia had insisted the tapes were originals but later backtracked and said he was not an expert.

Paguia told reporters later that he did not ask Tatad about the source of the tapes but he noted that Tatad mentioned that they were also only mailed to him.

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. said that the fact that Tatad was the source of the tapes showed that partisan politics was behind their release.

"This is not about the truth. This is all about a power grab. This is all about selfish political interest at its worst," Pichay said.

"It was highly suspicious why Attorney Paguia refused to reveal the source of his tapes in the previous hearings despite persistent demands from several congressmen. He was apparently trying to stonewall the investigation as long as possible to prevent Mr. Tatad's name from surfacing," he added.

Tainted source

Pichay said that Tatad, being one of the opposition's top leaders, was a "tainted source" of the tapes.

"This fact negates the former senator's credibility and the credibility of any other information that may come from him," he said.

In a bid to establish the source of the wiretap, the House panel yesterday summoned T/Sgt. Vidal Doble, but the agent of the Armed Forces intelligence service, Isafp, refused to answer most questions, claiming they were matters of national security.

The panel then went behind closed doors.

Samuel Ong, former deputy chief of the National Bureau of Investigation, said on June 10 he got the "mother of all tapes" from Doble, but Doble has denied this. Ong has gone into hiding since his disclosures.

Rep. Roilo Golez of Parañaque said Doble might not be free to talk because Isafp was holding his family and three common-law wives.

Garci's list 'purely black propaganda,' says Loren

From page A1

Legarda said she expected more political intrigues now that she had posted P4 million cash bond before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET) for the recount of votes in at least four pilot provinces where massive cheating in favor of her political opponent was reported.

Sen. Mar Roxas denied he telephoned Garcillano but admitted they met by chance a month or two before the election.

"The only time I talked with Commissioner Garcillano was in March or early April 2004 when I bumped into him by chance in a restaurant as I was on my way to my lunch meeting. We were introduced and we briefly exchanged pleasantries," Roxas said in a statement sent from Idaho, where he was attending the Sun Valley IT Conference.

Roxas, who not only topped the 2004 senatorial election but registered the highest vote in any Philippine election with 19.3 million votes, sought to clarify the "misconception" created by Garcillano's statement.

"It was really a brief encounter. I'm sure I wished him and the Comelec well and voiced my hope for clean and honest elections," Roxas told the INQUIRER.

Sen. Jamby Madrigal, who had earlier said she did not know Garcillano, admitted she had spoken with Garcillano.

"I did not call Mr. Garcillano. In one of the political meetings I was having long before the actual elections, somebody passed to me the phone, and to my surprise told me that, it was Commissioner Garcillano on the other line. I did not ask Mr. Garcillano for anything. I did not attempt to exert influence over him. I do not know (him) personally," Madrigal said.

She did not say who passed the phone to her and why Garcillano was on the phone. Senate sources said Madrigal could have known Garcillano since she served as consultant for children's and social services of then Vice President Arroyo.

Mandate respectable

"My mandate is respectable ... I have never condoned electoral fraud. The votes I have received, were the free and unhindered expression of the sovereign will. I am absolutely confident that the election returns the administration has been careful to suppress, will be my vindication," she said.

Madrigal said she would file a petition in the Senate Electoral Tribunal of the Comelec for the election returns to be opened for public scrutiny.

"I did not talk to Commissioner Garcillano to manipulate the votes in favor of my father," said House Minority Leader Francis Escudero. However, he said he met Garcillano by chance at the Manila Hotel during the canvassing of votes. Escudero said he already knew that his father had a slim chance of winning a seat in the senate.

Garcillano said Escudero spoke to him on behalf of his father, Salvador, who ran and lost in the senatorial race.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson called on his colleagues in the minority to explain their calls to Garcillano, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos or other any other Comelec official.

"It's still improper for any candidate to call up an election official," Lacson told the Inquirer. "The opposition senators should explain the circumstances of their calls to the election commissioners. They owe it to the people," Lacson said.

Asked about Abalos' statement that Sen. Jinggoy Estrada called up Abalos, Estrada said, "I cannot remember." Estrada, who was confined in a hospital yesterday, pointed out that Abalos was his colleague when they were still mayors. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Michael Lim Ubac, Jerome Aning, Philip C. Tubeza*

Scout Ranger major sacked over anti-GMA pamphlets

From page A1

tions chief of the First Scout Ranger Regiment based in Nueva Ecija on Sunday, Maj. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, head of the Special Operations Command (Socom) and the incoming Army chief, told reporters.

Aquino was sacked for "politicking" after it was found that he was the source of pamphlets, titled "A New Order," that were being distributed among the ranks and questions Ms Arroyo's administration.

The President has been accused of cheating in the May 2004 polls. She has apologized to the nation for improperly telephoning an election official but denied she rigged the vote.

Still on active duty

Reform-oriented mid-ranking military officers have threatened to quit as a form of protest, officials said.

The Ranger regiment has been involved in a dozen coup attempts since 1986, when street protests removed the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. The last time Ranger officers were implicated in a failed coup attempt was in July 2003.

Aquino "is calling for a change in the political setup. We deemed it proper to relieve him," Esperon said. He added that the major remained on active duty, although he had been advised to go on vacation.

He said that while Aquino could "entertain political thoughts," he could not do so while in the military service.

"Otherwise, [we would have a scenario where] the Armed Forces might become unnecessarily politicized. This is exactly what we fear," Esperon said.

He clarified, however, that Aquino's pamphlets did not mention replacing the President with any particular politician or group.

'Troublemakers'

On Monday, an Army spokesperson said the military had stepped up efforts to identify potential "troublemakers" within the ranks of soldiers, as pressure rises for the President to quit over allegations of election fraud and corruption.

The political opposition has accused Ms Arroyo and her political allies of using the military to rig the results of the elections last year. They base that charge on alleged wiretapped recordings played at the House of Representatives.

"I don't think we deserve to be pilloried like this," Esperon told reporters. "We have a mission, but it was not to interfere with the honest, peaceful and orderly conduct of elections."

He also contested media reports saying a group of young army officers were planning to go on mass leave, protesting the military's role in manipulating election results.

"I am confident that there is no such thing as a mass leave of officers under my command," he said. "There is no such thing in other units."

The President's spokesperson, Ignacio Bunye, called on politicians to spare the military from political controversy, adding the government has "already gone a long way in reforming and professionalizing the Armed Forces."

Quitting?

On Wednesday, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, who is a former military chief, said a group of officers was considering quitting to protest allegations that Ms Arroyo used the army intelligence unit in last year's polls.

Biazon, who ran under Ms Arroyo's ticket last year, said a group of active-duty officers, including several generals, called on him on Saturday.

The officers were "hopping mad" over allegations that the administration used the military to allegedly steal the vote and asked him whether as a last resort they should file mass resignations.

Biazon said he counseled the group to stay put "because if they do this, this country will be thrown into chaos."

Esperon said the Army found out about Aquino's activities from soldiers who got copies of political documents circulated by the young army officer.

PMA Class '91 baron

He described Aquino as a "very analytical, very good officer" who was elected baron or first captain by his classmates at the Philippine Military Academy Class 1991.

"But as I said, [you can't] do those things that are outside your duty," he said.

He stressed that Aquino's relief was not connected to the supposed plan by junior officers for mass leave or mass resignation.

The sacking came just two days after another officer, Col. Gregorio Catapang, chief of staff of the Northern Luzon Command, denied press reports that he and other officers were plotting to destabilize the Arroyo administration.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said a check with military units showed no seething restiveness.

"Our intelligence units are continuously monitoring," said Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, AFP public information chief.

Ms Arroyo survived a mutiny by several hundred soldiers who seized part of the financial district of Makati in July 2003 to protest alleged government corruption. Most of the lower-ranking defendants have since been freed after serving reduced jail terms. *With INQUIRER wires*

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Protestant churches want GMA to resign

From page A1

In a statement, NCCP chair Most Rev. Ignacio Soliba said NCCP leaders were demanding Ms Arroyo's resignation on the basis of her admission that she had talked with an election official allegedly to rig the 2004 election.

"She will forever be hounded by people's questions about her moral ascendancy and legitimacy to lead this country," Soliba said. "The most honorable thing for her to do now is to resign."

Ceausescu's fate

Ms Arroyo may end up "executed in the streets" like a Romanian dictator if she refuses to resign over allegations she stole last year's election, a communist rebel spokesperson said.

"What we see is that if (she) does not resign ... she most probably will be forcefully booted out by the people, and the worst thing is she may meet the same fate as Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, who were toppled and executed in the streets," Gregorio Rosal, spokesperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines, told dzMM radio.

Twenty mayors for GMA

Amid the growing calls for Ms Arroyo to give up power, 20 city and town mayors came to her defense.

"We, as mayors, will oppose any move to unseat the President by means violative of the Constitution," the mayors said in a unity statement.

"Let us resolve this crisis only through constitutional processes," they said at a press conference at the Rembrandt Hotel in Quezon City.

Kariton ng Mahirap

A CARTFUL of hopes: Leaders of different religious groups led by Fr. Robert Reyes (right) and Fr. Raul "Puti" Enriquez lead the "Pilgrimage of Hope" march to demand the resignation of President Arroyo. RUDY ESPERAS

The group included Mayors Feliciano Belmonte Jr. of Quezon City, Lito Atienza of Manila, Edward Hagedorn of Puerto Princesa, and Rodrigo Duterte of Davao City. Mayors from Ms Arroyo's home province of Pampanga also attended the event.

But in Leyte, the president of the Vice Mayor's League in the Philippines-Eastern Visayas (VMLP-8) urged Ms Arroyo to step down.

Vice Mayor Efren Redoña of Tabontabon in Leyte said he joined the calls for the President to step down because he was convinced that Ms Arroyo wanted to "rig the results of the elections in her favor."

Provincial governors in the country are expected to meet with the President in Malacañang today to express their support for her administration, according to Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone.

A group of stock analysts and traders also rallied behind the President. In a statement, Astro C. del Castillo, director of the Association of Securities Analysts of the Philippines, said the group was against using extra-constitutional means to remove Ms Arroyo from power.

Doubts about honesty

While admitting they were "moved" by the President's admission, Soliba and his fellow NCCP members said it did not "allay the people's doubts about the honesty and genuineness of the election results."

In a televised admission and apology on June 27, Ms Arroyo claimed she phoned an "election official" but only to protect her votes. She claimed the outcome of the election had already been decided before the conversation.

The NCCP said it was "saddened" that the President was concerned about protecting her votes when she should have been protecting the "people's well-being."

"A country can only be strong if it is led by one who enjoys the trust, respect and support of the broad masses of the people," the group said.

While the NCCP had already taken a definitive stand, Catholic bishops will still meet beginning tomorrow to draft their official position on the controversy.

Decisive action

In an ad in the Inquirer, 178 faculty, professionals and staff of the Ateneo said the "present crisis requires swift and decisive action lest it lead to a prolonged stalemate that could in the end bring about greater polarization and violence."

They said they pray that Ms Arroyo set the example of self-sacrifice by "voluntarily giving up power."

They also called for the setting up of an Independent Truth Reform and Reconciliation Commission not only to investigate the taped conversations between Ms Arroyo and an election official but also to bring into the open the nature of the electoral system.

For its part, the Sanggunian ng Mag-aaral ng Pamantasang Ateneo de Manila said Ms Arroyo's calls to an election official "do not demonstrate merely a lapse of judgment but impropriety, suspicion of electoral fraud, and most gravely, betrayal of the public's trust.

Earlier, the dean of the Ateneo Law School said he would let Ms Arroyo decide whether to resign or not while administrators of the university led by president Bienvenido Nebres did not issue a categorical stand on the matter.

Ms Arroyo earned a master's degree in economics from the Ateneo de Manila and once held a teaching position at the university.

The Assumption College, where Ms Arroyo earned her college degree, called for the formation of a truth commission and demanded accountability. *(See page A19.)*

Common sentiment

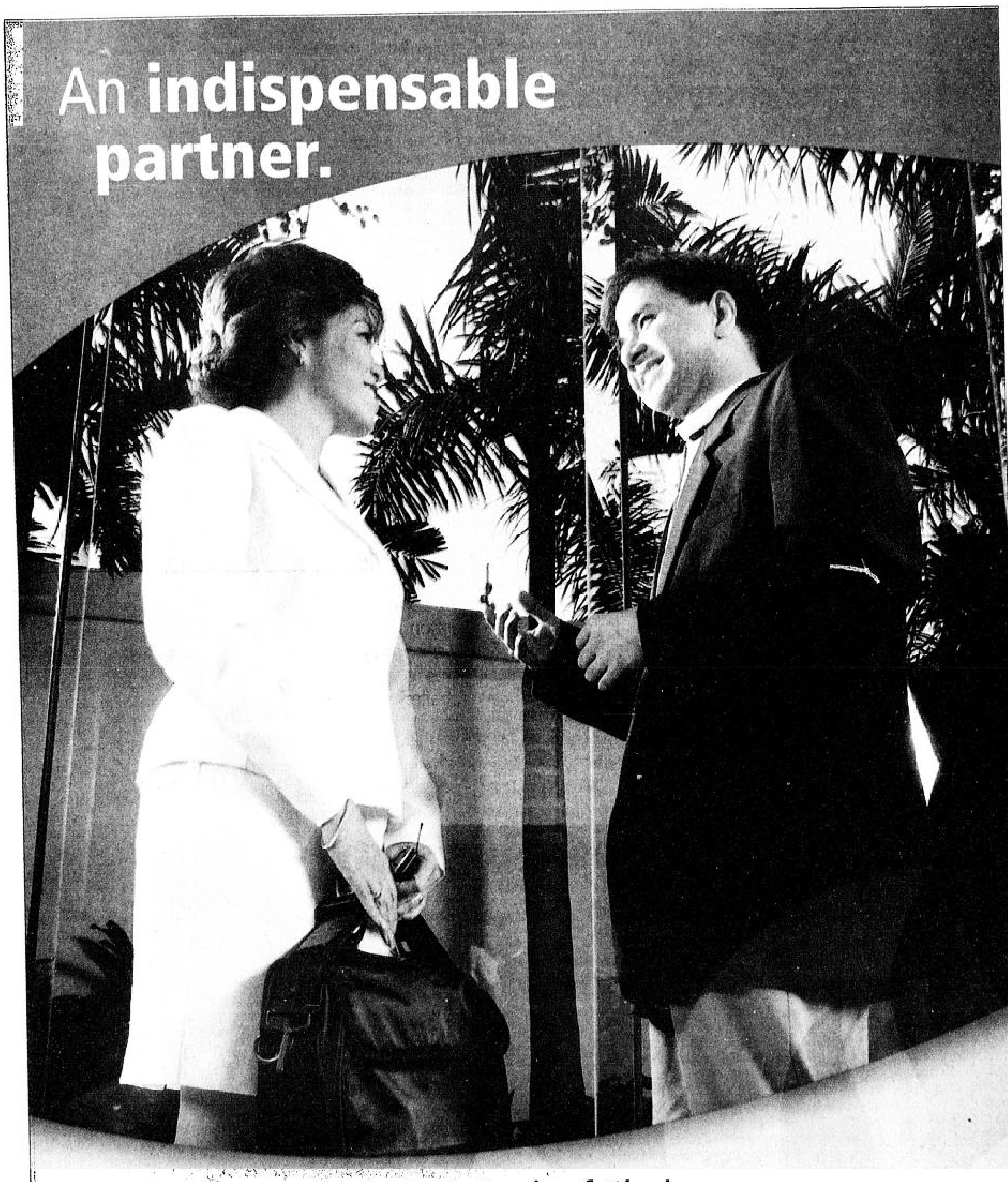
The IBP-Negros Oriental board of directors reached the decision to call for Ms Arroyo's resignation at a meeting last week, according to Rodrigo Icao, IBP-Negros Oriental president.

Icao said that prior to their meeting, he talked to many lawyers in Negros Oriental and the common sentiment was for Ms Arroyo to step down. There are about 500 IBP members in Negros Oriental.

Most of the lawyers in the province, he claimed, had lost their confidence in the President as a result of her wiretapped phone conversation with an election official at the height of the canvassing of votes in the 2004 elections.

He added that the IBP's position was that Ms Arroyo committed "betrayal of public trust and has violated the Omnibus Election Code when she talked with (election) Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to ensure her victory."

Icao said the IBP in the province was not in favor of impeaching the President because impeachment was a long process. "What the country needs now is a new leadership," he said. *With reports from Alcuin Papa in Manila and Romy G. Amarado and Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*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Major faces grilling for director's death

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE MARINE officer who reportedly owned the gun that killed TV director Louis "Luigi" Santiago will have to face investigation by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) or face charges.

Major Robert Velasco of the Marines has been subpoenaed with a certain Charito Angeles, who reportedly owned the Toyota Hi-Lux used as the getaway vehicle of the gunman that killed Santiago early morning of June 8.

Six other persons, including a policeman, were wounded in the shooting incident outside V-Bar at the Ayala Center in Makati City.

Oliver Jameiro has surrendered and confessed to firing the gun that killed Santiago.

Wycoco said the NBI coursed the subpoena for Velasco through Vice Admiral Ernesto de Leon, Navy flag officer in command, "for him to direct the Marine official to honor the NBI's invitation."

Wycoco added that they also sent a summons to Angeles' last known address at the posh Hillsborough subdivision in Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

"We learned that Angeles was a frequent visitor to the United States and we do not know if she is presently in the country," Wycoco said.

The NBI director stressed that Angeles might be criminally liable because Jameiro said that she was the one who handed him the gun that he used to shoot the victims.

"At the very least, she could be charged with being an accomplice to a homicide or even as a principal by inducement. Without her apparent help, the crime might not have taken place," Wycoco said.

The NBI director said they were still studying what charges to file against Velasco.

"Velasco's apparent negligence caused [someone's] death," Wycoco said.

He added that Velasco could also face an administrative case if he failed to explain how the Glock pistol used in the shooting ended up in Angeles' hands.

"It appears that Angeles is a friend of both Jameiro and Velasco," the NBI chief said.

Wycoco said they would file the charges against Angeles and Velasco tomorrow afternoon or Monday morning if they failed to appear before the NBI without justification.

Meanwhile, the Southern Police District (SPD) said yesterday that the arrest of Jameiro was accomplished through cooperation between them and the NBI.

"What is important is that government agencies like the NBI and the police worked together to solve a case," said SPD director Chief Supt. Wilfredo Garcia.

Makati policemen spent almost a month hunting down the gunman.

Garcia said the Makati police was the one that requested the NBI's assistance to make a background check on Jameiro, after an informant tipped them about the suspect's full name.

However, it was the NBI that arrested Jameiro last Sunday in Marikina City and subsequently filed charges against the suspect.

With Tarra V. Quismundo

Psychic says next President 'not a woman'

By Alcuin Papa

A PSYCHIC who predicted the ouster of Joseph Estrada from Malacañang, the death of two members of Congress and the Gulf War in 90s said yesterday that four generals—three from the military and one from the police—would withdraw their support for President Macapagal-Arroyo in the next few days.

At a forum in San Juan yesterday, Danny Atienza said the police general holds a three-star rank and that all the generals are associated with former President Fidel Ramos.

Atienza also appealed to Ms Arroyo to try talk to the general not to continue with their plan.

The psychic also told reporters that Arroyo would be ousted "sooner rather than later," after which a transition government headed by another woman would take over the country. "She (GMA) will not last," he added.

"This woman will rule for a very short period and supervise the holding of new elections. A man will win the elections and a woman will never ever rule the country," Atienza said in Filipino, adding that Vice President Noli De Castro "would never, never, never be President."

"This woman will be chosen by the people," Atienza continued. The psychic declined to confirm the woman's identity, despite questions from reporters if she could be actress Susan Roces, wife of the late Fernando Poe Jr., opposition standard bearer.

Atienza also said that the next president would have the combinations of the letters "O-S" and "E-L" in his name. He noted that all presidents of the country have these letter combinations, with the exception of Emilio Aguinaldo, Ramon Magsaysay who died in office, Corazon Aquino, and Ms Arroyo.

Even Poe, whose real name is Ronald Allan Kelley Poe, bears the magic letter combination, Atienza said. Ramos is still a "dark horse" in the search for the next president as he is a great influence over the office, Atienza said, noting that Ramos has both letter combinations in his name.

If the President does not step down, Atienza said "there would be chaos and anarchy in the streets." He also said the period between July 13 and August 13 would be critical for Ms Arroyo. During this time, two bishops will also withdraw their support for the President while the business sector will be divided.

Among his other predictions:

- Two radio stations would be destroyed and two banks would close down
- Many members of both houses in Congress would abandon the President
- Former Commission on Elections commissioner Virgilio Garcillano would "face judgment before the nation," Arroyo would be "forgiven by the people," and First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and officials of the Government Service Insurance System would face a plunder trial.
- Taal volcano would erupt soon
- Japan would fall into the sea in 2020, and there would be more air disasters.

Once the country surmounts the current crisis, however, Atienza said there would be a period of relative economic growth and political stability until the year 2010.

Last March, Atienza predicted that Poe would win the last presidential elections, but the country would be in a state of anarchy in case he lost.

He also said earlier that the President would face the same fate as Estrada. Before that, Atienza predicted the death of Reps. Marcial Punzalan and Hilario Ramiro.

Security guard killed by MRT money train

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IT WAS routine for security guard Simon Balucos to walk the Metro Rail Transit (MRT 3) tracks from late night until early morning.

But what was a usual patrol yesterday morning ended in tragedy for Balucos when the train that was used to deliver tickets and collect money from the different MRT stations hit the watchman between the Guadalupe and Buendia stations at about 4:30 a.m.

"He was walking on the platform beside the railings near the tracks when the train passed. He might have been pulled into the tracks by the speeding train," said Ronaldo Lastimoso, chief security officer of Achievers Security Agency.

Balucos, 28, was hit by the southbound train and dragged for 149 meters, resulting in severe head and body injuries.

His body was found at about 5 a.m. some 300 meters from the Guadalupe station. His clothes were torn, while his medicine kit, handgun, shoes, wallet, and hat were scattered along the tracks.

"We are not sure yet how or why he was hit because he is a veteran in that kind of job, but it was an accident," said Lastimoso, who related that Balucos had been on nightshift duty since August last year.

Lastimoso said the money train, manned by Randy Santiago, was then running at full speed, having stopped last at the Boni Avenue station. It had skipped Guadalupe station which was routinely serviced by the train on its northward swing.

Dennis Roldan stays in custody of PNP

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE PASIG City Regional Trial Court has ordered the transfer to the Pasig City Jail of five accused in the kidnapping of a 3-year-old boy five months ago but did not act on the transfer of alleged mastermind Dennis Roldan, a former actor and congressman.

In her order, Judge Agnes Carpio said she found probable cause in the kidnapping for ransom case against Roldan's co-accused Noel San Andres, Rowena San Andres, Romeo Orcajada, Adrian Domingo and Octavio Garces.

She then ordered their transfer to the Pasig City Jail.

Roldan remains in the custody of the Philippine National Police Detention Cell and the Philippine Anti-Crime and Emergency Response.

The arraignment of the five accused was set for Aug. 2, based on the commitment order.

Roldan, his alleged girlfriend Suzette Wang and the five others, have been implicated in the kidnapping case in February.

The group allegedly asked for P250-million ransom at the start of the negotiations.

The court earlier suspended proceedings against Roldan, saying the justice department should first conduct a preliminary investigation on the charges against him.

Meanwhile, the judge granted a motion of the prosecution to issue a hold departure order against Wang.

GMA relies too much on her AFP chief

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

SEN. RODOLFO Biazon said some idealistic officers had planned to go on mass leave or resign their positions because of allegations that some generals had meddled in the last elections.

Biazon, former Armed Forces chief of staff and Marine commandant, said he prevailed upon these officers not to carry out their plan.

The chair of the Senate committee on defense and national security said he told President Macapagal-Arroyo about the sentiments of the officers he had met in several groups.

The sentiments of the military officers supposedly relayed to the senator had been reported in the newspapers.

But what was not reported were the hard feelings against their commander-in-chief that the officers relayed to Biazon.

The senator told this columnist over the phone Tuesday that the officers also expressed their disappointment over the extension of the term of Gen. Efren Abu, AFP chief of staff.

Abu's term was extended until the middle of August although his replacement, Lt. Gen. Generoso Senga, Army Commander, had already been named.

The officers, Biazon said, would have wanted the President to consider seniority in the choice of Abu's replacement.

Vice Admiral Ernesto de Leon, Navy flag-officer-in-command, would have been the right choice since he was senior to Senga.

Although De Leon and Senga were classmates at the Philippine Military Academy (Class 1972), the former was the first to get the "star" rank.

Seniority is very much respected in the military.

But Biazon said he told the officers that it was the President's prerogative as commander-in-chief to choose who to appoint to the highest position in the AFP.

Biazon's report was a revelation in light of the AFP's alleged pledge of loyalty to the President if she would be placed in a critical situation.

How could Ms Arroyo expect all her troops to stand four square behind her if many of them have hard feelings toward her?

As I've said in previous columns, the President should not readily believe everything that her chief of staff tells her. She should counter-check with her men in the field.

President Marcos' fault was he relied too much on the say-so of his chief of staff, Gen. Fabian Ver.

He didn't know the sentiments of the rank and file because he was insulated from them.

ASSUMPTION SAN LORENZO

"ACROSS THE DARKNESS, WE SHALL SEE THE DAWN."

(Blessed Marie Eugenie, R.A)

Amidst the political crisis facing our country today, we, the Religious of the Assumption and the Assumption College, strongly endorse the Pastoral Letter of Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, DD. We root ourselves in the Christian principles of our foundress, Blessed Marie Eugenie, to guide us during these challenging times:

1. We believe in truth and justice. In the pursuit of truth, we support the institution of an independent Truth Commission composed of persons with integrity. While we forgive, we demand accountability.
2. We respect the freedom and right of each person to due process as embodied in our Constitution.
3. We call for authentic reform and the radical purging of corruption in our political system through non-violent means. We reject greed, self-interest, and the unbridled ambition of individuals, groups, and leaders.
4. We uphold the common good. We call on each Filipino to pray and to sacrifice for national renewal, healing and unity.

We recognize that we are all part of this crisis. We are all called to conversion. We will act justly and promote peace in our own little spheres. We believe that across this darkness, we will see the dawn in our beloved Philippines.

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KETAMINE IN MANILA APARTMENT

Firemen stumble on $1.6M in drugs

By Margaux C. Ortiz

WHEN there's smoke, there's fire. But in the case of an empty Manila apartment, responding firemen found $1.6 million (P89.6 million) worth of illegal drugs.

About 16 kilos of suspected ketamine, or "K," with an estimated foreign market value of $1.6 million was found in Paco early yesterday morning, said Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, director of the Western Police District (WPD).

"Our Anti-Illegal Drugs Task Force is now conducting follow-up operations to trace the apartment's tenant, Dianne Manansala, to question her about the discovery," Bulaong said.

Frequently abroad

The WPD chief added that according to information gathered by his men, Manansala frequently went abroad.

PO3 Ricardo Magbanua of WPD Station 5 said Manansala's neighbors at the corner of Merced and Icasiano Streets called authorities when they saw smoke coming out of her apartment at about 4 a.m. yesterday.

However, responding fire fighters discovered that the smoke came from drug substances burning in a vat, Magbanua said.

Police later seized liquid chemicals, a weighing scale, a plastic bag sealer, two burners, and four liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanks from the two-bedroom apartment unit, the investigator added.

Magbanua also said that neighbors saw a certain "Bunday" leave Manansala's apartment unit with a bag in tow.

Animal tranquilizer

Ketamine, also called ketamine hydrochloride, is a short-acting general anesthetic and a strong animal tranquilizer that has hallucinogenic and painkilling qualities.

It is classified as a rave drug used in parties characterized by frenzied and raucous merrymaking.

The illegal drug could be taken in tablet or powder form and has the same effects as another well-known party drug, Ecstasy.

Some sell the tablet form of ketamine as "Ecstasy."

People taking the drug reportedly experience a speedy rush within a few minutes of sniffing the powder—20 minutes if taken as a pill, quicker if injected—leading to intense hallucination and even out of body experiences, along with physical incapacitation.

The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency said ketamine was a popular rave drug in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Bulaong said the drugs found in the Paco apartment could be intended for export.

NGOs shut out from Patrol 117

By Nancy C. Carvajal

NONGOVERNMENT organizations (NGOs) affiliated with Patrol 117 are now barred from using the police hotline to preserve the integrity of the program, according to the National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Vidal Querol.

Patrol 117 is a hotline for reporting crimes, accidents, fires and public disturbances.

"All NGOs are temporarily de-affiliated due to numerous complaints against them," said Querol in a memorandum dated July 4, 2005.

Querol did not elaborate on the reported complaints but ordered that NGOs still interested in remaining associated with the program would have to pass a screening committee.

Another police officer said some NGOs which he refused to identify had been using the program as its assignee in fund-raising activities.

"We received reports that the program had been used as the beneficiary of fund-raising activities that were not sanctioned," the police officer said.

The Patrol 117 was launched by the Department of Interior and Local Government in July 2001 during the time of then Secretary Jose Lina.

People can also text 117 to report information like drug hot spots or other community problems.

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Question of the Week

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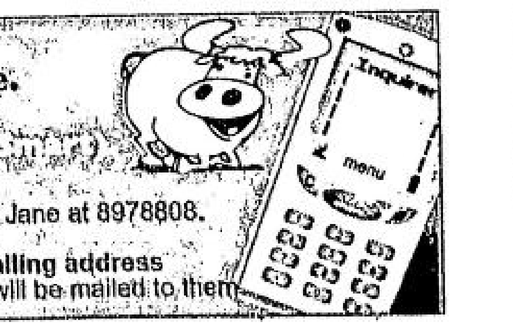

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London bags 2012 Olympics

SINGAPORE—London was awarded the 2012 Olympics on Wednesday, defeating European rival Paris in the final round of voting to take the games back to the British capital for the first time since 1948. Moscow, New York and Madrid were eliminated in the first three rounds. *AP*

Django joins Bata in pool sidelines

KAOHSIUNG, Taiwan—Francisco "Django" Bustamante joined Efren "Bata" Reyes in the sidelines of the 2005 World Pool Championship after suffering an 8-10 upset from Chang Jung-ling of Chinese Taipei in the Round of 64 yesterday at the Kaohsiung Business Exhibition Center.

Reyes, the 1999 world champion, didn't even make it to the tournament proper, finishing sixth with just three wins in seven games late Tuesday to rank No. 6 in his group in the eliminations.

Only the top four players from each eight-man group advance.

Defending champion Alex Pagulayan and snooker specialist Marlon Manalo joined longshot Rodolfo Luat in today's Round of 32.

But Ronnie Alcano bowed out after a 10-7 loss to 2003 champion Thorsten Hohmann of Germany and Dennis Orcollo also got waylaid by Taiwanese Wang Hua-fong, 10-5.

Pagulayan beat Park Shin Young of Korea, 10-5, while Manalo rallied to nip Charles Bryant of the US, 10-9. Luat whipped Luong Chi Dung of Vietnam, 10-1.

Still playing at presstime were Warren Kiamco and Gandy Valle. Kiamco was up against Australian David Reljic while Valle was facing Do Hoang Quan of Vietnam.

Bustamante, the 2002 runner-up, squandered a 5-1 advantage early in the match against Chang, who took an 8-6 lead.

BUSTAMANTE: Sputtering finish led to his elimination in the World Pool Championship.

Phone Pals rebound

By June Navarro

TALK 'N Text, starring the tournament's top two players, finally overwhelmed San Miguel Beer, 103-77, last night and avoided falling into a 0-3 hole in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference Finals at the Araneta Coliseum.

Willie Miller proved worthy of the conference's MVP award as he teamed up with Jerald Honeycutt, the league's best import, to help the Phone Pals score a breakthrough win in Game 3 of the best-of-seven championship series.

Honeycutt topscored with 28 points while grabbing 10 rebounds and Miller finished with 12 as the Phone Pals averted another collapse when the Beermen rallied after falling by as many as 22 points.

The Phone Pals squandered a 20-point spread in Game 2, allowing the Beermen to take a 2-0 lead in the series.

Victor Pablo, who bungled two charities that could have sent Game 2 into overtime, redeemed himself by chipping in 14 points and Felix Belano added 13 to highlight a big show by the second stringers.

"We've been in the same situation before," said Talk 'N Text coach Joel Banal. "To beat them, we should play the same type of basketball that we played today."

The Phone Pals are now on track to match their 2003 All-Filipino Cup win over Coca-Cola, where they charged back from a 0-2 deficit by sweeping the next four games for the title.

"We expect them (Beermen) to come out in Game 4 with the same intensity that they exhibited in Games 1 and 2," said Banal.

The scores:

TALK 'N TEXT 103—Honeycutt 28, Pablo 14, Belano 13, Miller 12, Carey 11, Telan 9, Taulava 5, Alapag 5, Ravena 4, Fran 2, Camaso 0.

SAN MIGUEL 77—Custis 16, Ildefonso 14, Belasco 12, Pena 10, Racela 8, Hontiveros 8, Seigle 7, Adriano 2, Lopez 0, Mente 0.

Quarters: 25-21, 49-40, 75-58, 103-77.

Dolphins, Cards share NCAA lead

PHILIPPINE Christian University found itself on the verge of an endgame collapse but witnessed Perpetual Help on an even weaker footing to prevail, 54-40, yesterday and join other unbeaten leaders in the 81st NCAA season at the Cuneta Astrodome.

In the second game, Mapua overcame a third-quarter sputter to defeat San Beda College, 62-53, and march among the leaders with its third straight win.

PCU coach Junel Baculi could not hide his emotions and threw himself on the floor as the Dolphins failed to score for more than four minutes in the fourth quarter, inexplicably missing from the floor despite the lack of any defensive hustle from the Altas.

"I don't know how my players developed the habit of playing to the same errors of the other teams," said Baculi.

PCU and Mapua joined Letran and St. Benilde on top of the standings at 3-0, while Perpetual and San Beda have yet to win in three games.

Earlier, the PCU Baby Dolphins routed Perpetual High, 105-54, for their first win in two games. Perpetual fell to 0-3. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Pagunsan qualifies

JUVIC Pagunsan slowed down a bit with a two-over par 74 yesterday, settling for a share of third place at the close of the 36-hole stroke play elimination of the Japan Amateur Championship, but gaining a spot in the prestigious Japan Open slated in October.

By finishing among the top 5 in the 155-player field after the qualifying stage, Pagunsan clinched a berth in the all-pro Japan Open, set Oct. 13-16, at the Hirono Golf Club in Hyogo, Japan, which will serve as a fitting warm-up for his stint for the Manila SEA Games in November.

Pagunsan sizzled with a 68 at the Daisen Golf Club Tuesday to seize control. Action shifts to match play starting today.

SEAG sponsors get tax breaks

By Musong R. Castillo

WITH time winding down, Malacañang yesterday authorized the Philippine Southeast Asian Games organizing committee to conduct a national fund raising campaign for the SEA Games opening in November.

Under proclamation No. 872 signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo last June 30, full tax exemptions and deductions will be granted to all donations made by private citizens, residents and entities to the Philsoc.

"This is a big boost to our efforts of attracting our corporate friends in being part of the SEAG bandwagon," said Philsoc chair and former Bulacan Gov. Roberto Pagdanganan.

This is "a fitting response of the Arroyo administration to the patriotic cause that Philippine business is fostering in being an active partner in the national effort to stage a successful SEA Games," said Pagdanganan.

The 23rd edition of the Games is scheduled to open on Nov. 27 in Manila and three other key cities and the Philsoc is trying to raise roughly P1.1 billion in cash and other merchandise needed to host the Games.

Philsoc has earlier secured Gold sponsorship packages from Globe, PLDT-Mabuhay and the Lucio Tan Group of Companies. Each of those packages is worth P100 million.

SA GITNA NG KRISIS

SAAN PUPUWESTO ANG MGA NASA GITNA?

KUNG KIKILOS SI SUSAN, SASAMA BA KAYO?

Ngayong Huwebes, alas 10 n.g. sa ABC

INQ INQ TV TV

Suico in Barrera-Peden tiff

REIGNING Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation (OPBF) super featherweight champion Randy "Komong Bato" Suico may yet get his wish to fight Marco Antonio Barrera.

Suico yesterday confirmed that he is fighting on Sept. 17 underneath the Barrera-Robbie Peden World Boxing Council super featherweight title unification clash in Las Vegas against a yet unnamed opponent.

Showcasing Suico in Las Vegas must be the promoter's way of selling a possible Barrera-Suico clash if both come out victorious in September. Barrera is promoted by Golden Boy Promotions of Oscar De la Hoya.

Suico, managed by Japanese Joe Koizumi, defended his OPBF title with a fourth-round knockout of Thai Muanfahlek Kiatwichean in Lapu-Lapu City recently.

After his fourth successful defense of the title he won in 2002, Suico said he was looking forward to challenging Barrera.

Suico holds a fearsome 23-1 win-loss record with 20 KOs. His only defeat was a controversial split decision to Mzonke Fana last year in South Africa despite knocking down the South African twice.

Fana challenged Barrera on April 9 and lasted just two rounds. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

Cavite stuns Mantawi five

MANDAUE CITY—Far Eastern Insurance-backed Cavite continued its fiery comeback in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship Tuesday by nosing out erstwhile unbeaten Mantawi (Mandaue) Sparkling Nights, 89-87, at the Sports/Cultural Center here.

Melvin Mamaclay, Tristan Codamon and Buboy Rodriguez combined for Cavite's last 10 points to give the Insurers of Bacoor Vice Mayor Edwin Malvar and strong supporter Gov. Ireneo "Ayong" Maliksi their fifth win in nine games after a woeful 2-4 start in the Northern Conference.

The Hapee/Dewfoam-backed Sparkling Nights' Ardy Larong had a chance to extend the game but he muffed two freethrows in the last 2.4 seconds.

The Insurers nailed their third straight win while dealing Mantawi its first loss in four games in the tourney supported by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Cebu Pacific, Spring Cooking Oil, Accel, Molten, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo Motorycles, Hapee Toothpaste, Dewfoam, KSK Food Products (Boy Bawang), Ping Ping Lechon, Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

The Insurers seek their sixth win today when they go up against defending champion Tribu Sugbu at 7 p.m. at the Minglanilla Sports Center.

La Salle spikers gun for crown

LA SALLE guns for a sweep of the 2005 Shakey's V-League first conference crown against Santo Tomas at 3 p.m. today in Game 2 of the best-of-three title playoff at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

The Lady Archers seized the series' opener, 25-21, 18-25, 25-19, 27-25, at the Makati Coliseum last Monday to zero in on a second straight crown in this tournament sponsored by Shakey's Pizza.

La Salle also swept UST in the 2004 second conference final early this year after the Tigresses beat the Lady Archers in three games to cop the inaugural staging of this event last year.

San Sebastian likewise tries to wrap up its own best-of-three showdown for third place with Ateneo at 1 p.m. The Lady Stags trounced the Lady Eagles, 27-25, 25-19, 25-21, in the opener of the event backed by Accel, Mikasa, Dunkin' Donuts, IBC-13, the Philippine Sports Commission and Jemah Television.

AGUILAR: Asia's best rider

Aguilar targets historic victory

ONLY a major disaster can stop Revtex stalwart Glenn Aguilar from making history by clinching his second FIM Asian Motocross Championship.

Aguilar strengthened his status as Asia's best rider after ruling the third leg of the 2005 FIM Asian Motocross Championships in Macau recently.

"I can smell the title now. With only two legs to go, I am at a position where I want to be," added Aguilar, who aims to become the only Filipino to win a motorsport Asian title twice.

Aguilar, the 2003 Asian champion, conquered the muddy track and blasted the 26-rider field that included the best bikers from New Zealand, Australia, China, Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Malaysia, Singapore and Macau.

The Revtex Rocket was at his best in the second moto of the premier Pro 125, where he crushed the challenge of Thailand's Arnon Theplib by 26 seconds.

New Zealand's James Robinson, the erstwhile leader of the FIM series, came in third—45 seconds behind Aguilar.

SPORTSWATCH

Ang, Mendez dispute elite title

GUTSY Kelvin Tim Ang nipped Julius Magallanes of Centro Atletico, 15-13, 15-12, to reach the men's singles finals of the elite division of the JVC Open Badminton Championships yesterday. The win set up the 16-year-old Ang, playing out of Inflight/PNP/JLTC/Phil. Star, against Ralph Ian Mendez, 21, of University of San Jose Recoletos-Cebu, who subdued Alex Borromeo of Pohang BC, 15-5, 15-8, in the other semis match to gain a crack at the top P8,000 purse put up by JVC (Phils.) Inc. Janina Paredes beat Mary Joy Abad, 11-0, 11-3, to arrange a title showdown with Dalia Santiago.

Perez dominates Rallysprint Series

NATIONAL Rallycross champion Alex Perez of Team DMF won five of six classes in the first round of the Let's Go Racing National Rallysprint Series in Clark Air Base, Pampanga, recently. Driving a Honda Civic, Perez posted the best time of 1.00.08 in the 1.1-kilometer track laid out by the organizer. Carlos Anton, a familiar figure in the circuit races, posted 1.00.36 to finish second overall in a Toyota Corolla, while Jay Navarro settled for third with 1.00.85 in his Toyota Corolla. Ken Diaz finished third place in RP 13 with a time of 1.01.67, besting his father Jun Diaz. David Feliciano of Team DMF topped the Arrive and Drive Category with a time of 59.65. For inquiries, call 372-7374.

National Open duckpin rolls off July 9

GIFT certificates and trophies will be up for grabs in the National Open duckpin bowling tournament set July 9-17 at the Marketplace Bowling Center along Kalentong Street, Mandaluyong City. PHIDBC (Philippine Duckpin Bowling Council) president Inez G. Magbual said the event will mark the 30th founding anniversary of the association. The bowling group, originally called PHIDBA (Philippine Duckpin Bowling Association), was founded by Jose Antonio and Gloria G. Goloy. Competition will be conducted in men's and ladies' team, men's and ladies' singles (ABC), masters and mixed doubles. Major prizes are P30,000 and P25,000 gift certificates for the men's and ladies' team titlists.

Makati Coliseum derby slated Saturday

COCKFIGHTING returns at the fully air–conditioned Makati Coliseum on Saturday with the staging of the "LA 939 Group 3–Cock Derby." The event will be hosted by veteran cocker–sportsman Lito Alcantara of Rizal, one of the most consistent derby participants in the circuit. Submission of weights will be tomorrow from 2 p.m. to 9 pm. Interested parties may call 896–3545 or 895 –6475 and 895 -6453. Two more 3-cock derbies are slated on July 16 (All Captains Tuesday Club) and July 25 (WTJ Employees). Kags Paliza and Aba Badiola will host the "Daytime 4–Cock Derby" on Aug. 3.

Pasig Square Garden 5-cocker today

FRESH from winning the 2005 World Slasher Cup, Pangasinan cocker Matt Bitanga and J. Paneda loom as top favorites in today's "Daytime Bakbakan 5–Cock Derby" at the Pasig Square Garden. Bitanga and Paneda will again field their top rated MJ Golden Circle I and II entries. The derby will start at 3 p.m., said hosts Sam Mendoza and Aba Badiola. Also entered are 2005 Metro Cockers Association Cocker of the Year winners Boy Jiao and Edgar Coronel, Del Namoco, Delfin Garcia, Maj. Bobby Doromal, Ronnie Lacsina, Danny Pe, Dr. Cangco Suave, Edmer Abella, Oca Domingo, Butchoy Olano, Roning Santos, San Juan Coliseum Group and Butch Nunez. Call 646-5858 and 646-5828.

De Leon crashes Top 10 in 14th Asian triathlon

SINGAPORE—Ani de Leon broke the national record and became the first Filipino to rank in the top 10 of the 14th Asian Triathlon Championship Sunday.

With national champion Sandra Araullo suffering a fall in the bike dismount area and failing to finish the race, De Leon assumed the lead role for the Philippines with a time of 2 hours 20 minutes and 26 seconds in the 1.5K-swim, 40K-bike and 10K-run event.

De Leon broke the national record of 2:25:17 held by Nancy Pajarillo in the women's elite division. The Elite Under 23 RP team of Lea Coline Langit, Mimi Lucas, and Alexandra Ganzon also placed third in the team category behind powerhouse Japan and China.

Diners and Security Bank cards as well as First Gentleman Mike Arroyo backed the Filipinos' participation.

This July, JUST SHOP talks beauty!

July '05
No. 14
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
JUST SHOP
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* JUST SHOP magazine is given FREE to Inquirer subscribers in Metro Manila. If you want to be a subscriber, call 528-0183 or 527-3348.

Baguio terrain spices up Enduro

THE HIGH altitude of Baguio becomes one of the biggest tests for the participants of the Enduro San Mig Light Adventures 2005 when it hits the summer capital of the country on July 16.

The Baguio leg—the first of the three stages of the Enduro San Mig Light Adventures this year—is one of the highlights of the annual adventure race as the participants face harder and more stimulating challenges as they trek the unfamiliar terrain in cold weather.

All the teams—each composed of three persons—will start from a designated point in SM City Baguio and will go through all stations, some by sequence and others by a non-sequential system, and must arrive at the finish line before the cut-off period.

Biking will be the main means of transportation of each participant, but the sloping roads of Baguio will spice up the challenges lined up for the racers.

More than P50,000 will be up for grabs in this first leg of Enduro San Mig Light Adventures 2005.

San Mig Light, the low-calorie, right alcohol beer, has supported extreme sports for years and is inviting sporting enthusiasts to be part of this thrilling event.

The tasks, inspired by reality hit shows like "Survivor" and the "Amazing Race," include trekking rugged terrains and doing decisive activities that would bring racers all around the breezy conditions of Baguio.

"It's going to be very different this year," race director Neyney Guevarra said. "For one thing, while last year was a full non-sequential race, this year it goes back to the original format of a sequential race with a non-sequential leg squeezed into one portion of the race."

The event, brought to you by San Mig Light, is organized by X10 Events Inc.

The safety and technical directors of the event have ensured the well-being of the participants. Interested participants may call the Enduro hotline at 414-1489 or visit www.sanmiglight.com.ph for race details.

Lance takes command

Discovery Channel colors Armstrong yellow

BLOIS, France—Lance Armstrong is wearing his favorite Tour de France outfit again: The yellow jersey.

In a thrilling finish—during which the overall race leader crashed into a barricade—Armstrong and his Discovery Channel mates set a record of 57.32 kilometers per hour (35.54 miles per hour) Tuesday while winning the team time trial. The victory handed the 33-year-old American the lead after only four stages.

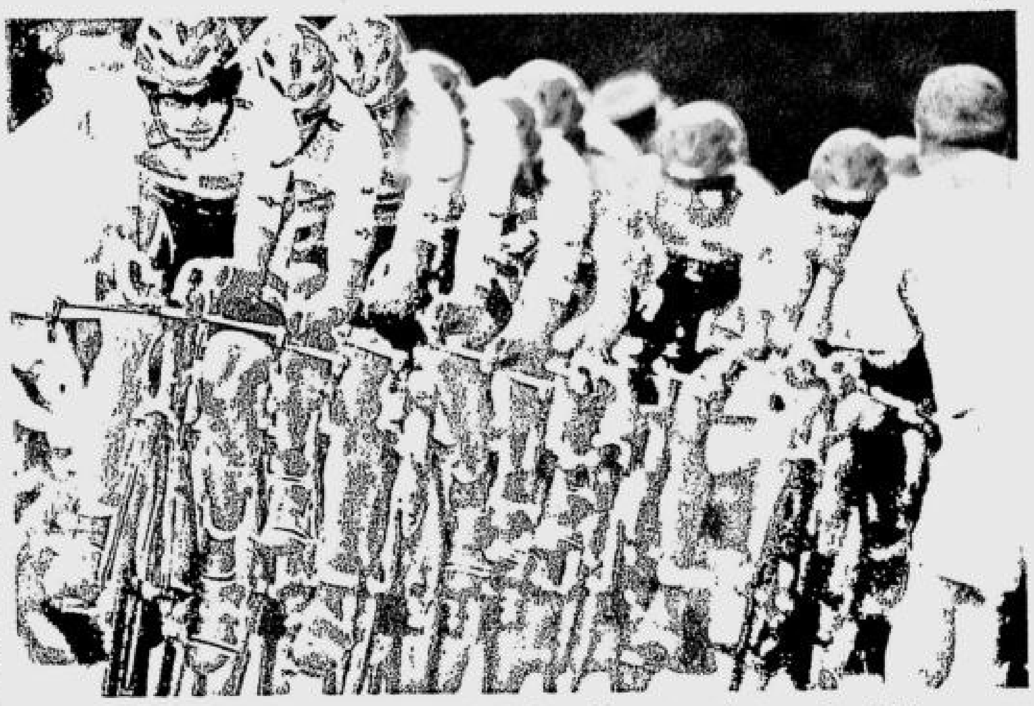
Armstrong will ride Wednesday wearing the distinctive yellow shirt—the 67th time he has done so—and maintaining a critical edge in his bid for an unprecedented seventh straight victory in his farewell Tour.

"It was the plan to take the jersey, but the priority was to have the best race possible, and gain time on our adversaries," Armstrong said.

That's exactly what happened.

Armstrong chiseled out a 1:21 lead over T-Mobile's Alexandre Vinokourov, while CSC's Ivan Basso was 1:26 back. Germany's Jan Ullrich, the 1997 Tour winner, was 1:36 behind the leader.

The victory marked the third straight year that Armstrong's squad won the team time trial, clocking 1 hour, 10 minutes, 39 seconds in the 67.5-km (41.85-mile) trek from Tours to Blois.



THE US Discovery Channel runs like a well-oiled machine to top the team time trial. AFP

Discovery Channel now commands seven of the top 15 spots in the standings, with Armstrong sidekick George Hincapie in second.

Now, Armstrong and Discovery must decide strategy: maintain the race lead or relinquish the yellow jersey, and the resulting pressure, for now, in hopes of regaining it by the July 24 finish in Paris. *AP*

The errant child

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

HERE'S a story that runs parallel to the case of the current basketball row gripping the country.

A child and his parents have made a deal: The child is not to swim in the river unless accompanied by an elder brother.

The child breaks the deal. He swims unaccompanied by an elder brother.

Parents learn about it. They consult the child's eight siblings. Verdict: The siblings unanimously suspend the child's swimming rights.

The parents agree.

Stubborn, the child goes swimming in the beach.

Parents learn about it. They consult the child's eight siblings. Verdict: The siblings unanimously expel the child's rights to swim either in the river or the beach.

Once more, the parents agree.

Unrepentant, the child goes to his grandparents and pleads his case.

Without hearing the side of the child's parents and siblings, the grandparents make a decision: The parents and all their siblings, including the errant child, are suspended from swimming in any body of water.

You agree with the grandparents' verdict?

I don't.

Here's a case of a child at fault being punished by his immediate family.

Comes now the extended family (grandparents) overruling that decision.

The verdict comes before an investigation is held.

Meanwhile, before the investigation could even start, all parties suffer.

Those that suffer the most are the parents.

Boy, it is summer! There's plenty to do in the sun and sand.

Parents could not join friends frolicking in the beach.

Parents could not join picnics that had been set long before the suspension came.

In short, what's summer without a swim? And they've booked beach trips and bought swimwear and suntan lotions already.

What a waste.

I now ask: Were the grandparents not guilty of meddling in the internal affairs of their children?

I mean, were they not supposed to ignore their grandchild's cry-baby tactics and instead respect the decision of their grandchild's parents?

The parents aren't kids anymore and are deemed capable of handling their own affairs. My God, they have nine children to begin with. And they have always observed democracy in the family: the majority always rules.

It is also quite valid to ask: Who did the grandparents' decision favor, the parents and their eight siblings or the errant child?

I say the errant child and the parents got the shorter end of it.

The child broke the deal and in doing so, he ought to be punished.

Instead of being repentant after the fact, the errant child committed another wrong. You don't correct a wrong by committing another wrong.

Why the grandparents acted the way they did boggles the mind.

The parents provided the answer to that: "The special relation between the grandparents and the grandchild had come in the way again."

How true.

When emotion gets in the way, all reason is drowned.

While parents are there to discipline, grandparents are known to spoil.

It's like the case of the coach-manager relationship in a basketball team all over again.

The coach cracks the whip, the manager whips out the cash.

Always, objectivity is lost when the heart meddles in the affairs of the mind.

* * *

For comments, e-mail menju@pldtdsl.net

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Thursday, July 7, 2005

HOLLYWOOD DREAM

Hosted by Eric Quizon

THE DREAM BEGINS JULY 17! The much-talked-about reality show "Hollywood Dream" will finally begin! Find out who will get a chance to fly to New York and Los Angeles, meet Hollywood producers and casting directors, get a Screen Actors Guild card, appear on "As the World Turns" and land a role in 2 movies being produced in Hollywood!

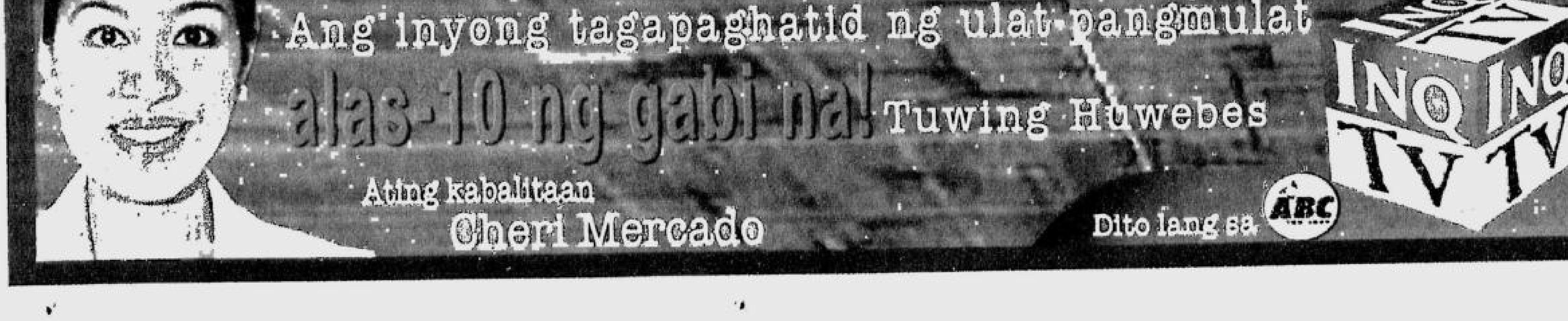
SUNDAY 9:00 PM

ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Showbiz No. 1	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Opids	TV Patrol World		Meteor Garden Full Edition	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Kampanerang Kuba	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Oh! Feel Young	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		FIBA (Reruns)				Sentro	American Idol			The Best Of Guinness Book Of Records		Big News	Inq TV		ESPN Golf	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	Tenjho Tenge	Shaman King	Flame Of Recca	Full House	24 Oras		Darna		Encantadia	Extra Challenge		Attic Cat	Magpakailanman			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	The Insider	WWE PPV Summer Slam 2004					Band Of Brothers		Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Shakey's V-League				TM Phil 9-Ball			IBC News Tonite		
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs	Ride With Funk Master Flex	American Pie				Cinematech	Family Guy	Mad TV		Reno 911	Crank Yankers	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Hip-Hop Nation	Ride With Funk Master Flex	WWE Velocity	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX	MYX Firsts	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	My MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX	Star MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Significant Others	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Good Morning Miami	Committed	American Dreams		Queer Eye For The Straight Girl		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Mahal Kita Walang Iba				American Adobo				Bulaklak Ng Maynila				Anak Ng Demonyo				Vampire Hunters	
Studio 23								Batman Beyond	Beyblade	Wazzup Wazzup	Birds Of Prey	Alias		Desperate Housewives		News Central	Oprah		Chefs On The Go
AXN		Fear Factor		CSI: NY (Season I)		Max Exposure (Season I)		The Associates		Alias (Season III)		Worst Case Scenario		Lost					
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Invasion Iowa	Growing Up Gotti	The Simple Life	Arrested Development	The Apprentice		Friends	Invasion Iowa
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		Your World Today	
National Geographic		Frontlines Of Construction		Marine Machine		Demolition Dynasty		Wildlife Detectives	Insects From Hell	Wow		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Frontlines Of Construction		Marine Machine	
Solar Sports	Kotv Magazine	TV Shopping		Sudirman Cup SF '05				WTA '05 Nasdaq			In This Corner		Sports Desk	2005 Fivb World Grand Prix				NBA Inside Stuff	NBA Action
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds	Life & Style		Area		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO	She's Having A Baby			High Risk (4:15 PM)			That Old Feeling (5:45 PM)				Scooby Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed			Blue Crush			Punch-Drunk Love (10:45PM)		
Star Movies				Sylvia			Beethoven's 2nd (5:45 PM)			Bulworth (7:15 PM)				There's Something About Mary				The Statement	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Xiaolin Showdown	Teen Titans	Zoids Fusors	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	Xiaolin Showdown	Teen Titans
ESPN				Tour De France 2005	2005 Kaohsiung World Pool Championship							Sportscenter Asia	2005 Kaohsiung World Pool Championship						
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	George Of The Jungle 2			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Treasure Planet	
Cinemax		For Whom The Bell Tolls					Dead Easy (5:45 PM)				No Way Up			Sweet Poison			Clockstoppers (10:35PM)		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Strong Medicine		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	The Nanny	Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Strong Medicine		Five Days To Midnight			Judging Amy (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia		First Time Film Makers	Hour China	Wild Discovery		Wild Weather		Extreme Machines		We Built This City		The Ultimate Guide		Extraordinary Experiences: Journey To The Ends Of The Earth: The Road To Shangri-la		Power Zone	
MTV Philippines			Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Get Spotted		TRL		Lokal: Orange & Lemons	MTV Divas		Battle for Ozzfest	One Bad Trip	Wildboyz	Cribs	On Board at MTV	MTV Urban Beats	VH1: Video Collection	
Sports Plus					Celebrity Poker				Raceworld		Tour De France	French Open Highlights				Tour De France	NASCAR Pepsi 400 Daytona		

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.



Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat

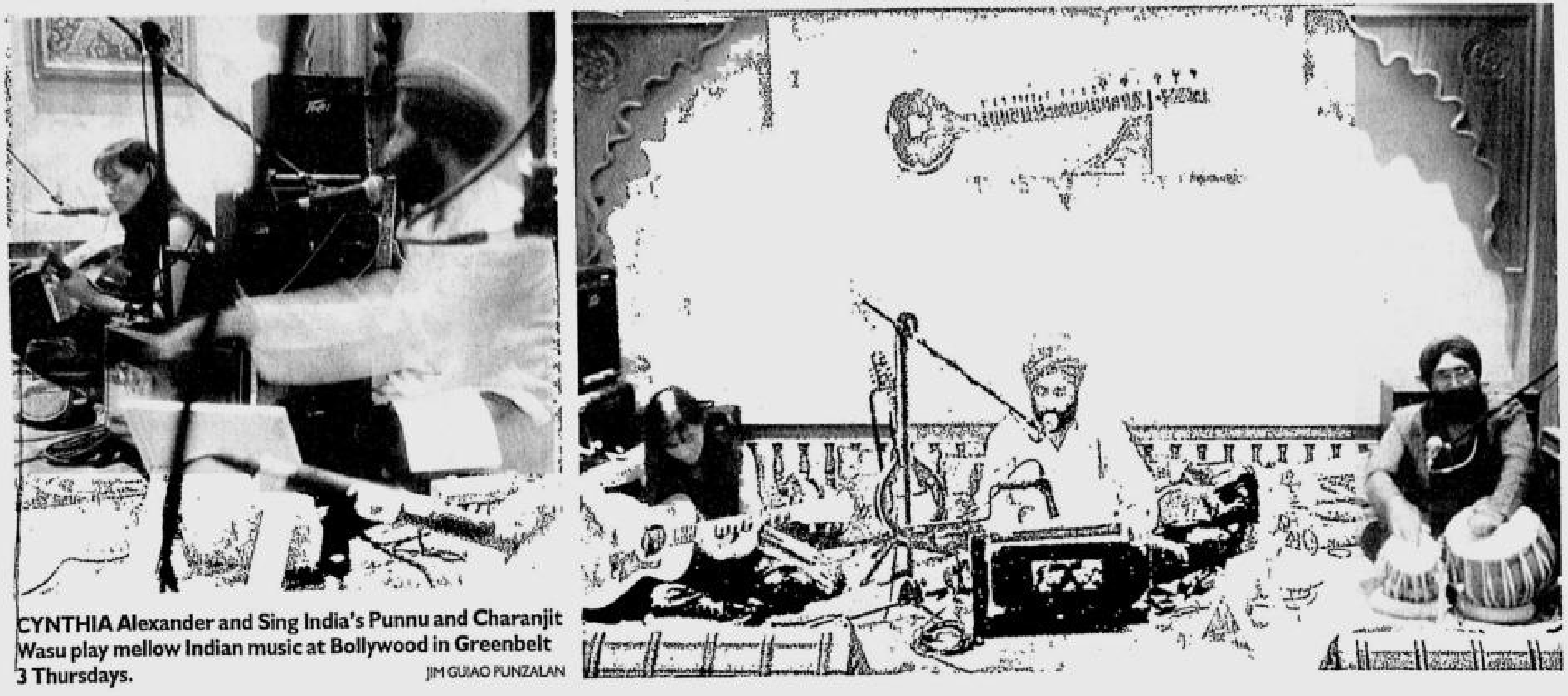
alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes

Ating kabalitaan

Cheri Mercado

Dito lang sa ABC

INQ TV



CYNTHIA Alexander and Sing India's Punnu and Charanjit Wasu play mellow Indian music at Bollywood in Greenbelt 3 Thursdays. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

A kind of hush

By Emmie G. Velarde

IF YOU dare cut your week into what's happened so far and what's forthcoming, and dare experience only the hour at hand without prospect or prejudice, step into Bollywood in Greenbelt 3 on a Thursday evening.

You will find three musicians on the platform sitting Indian-style—two of them are, in fact, Indian—and playing Indian music. The third musician is Cynthia Alexander, Filipina singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist. She will be playing the guitar, though not the way it is usually played.

(It would be convenient, but hasty, to describe her as an "acoustic artist," the millennium term for the 1980s "folk singer." But that would be inadequate, and unacceptable to her followers.)

SHOW TIME

Charanjit "CJ" Wasu will be rap-tap-clapping on the percussion set called tabla, finger-knuckle-palms a blur that hurls about a steady, hypnotic rhythm.

At the center will be CJ's brother Punnu Wasu on the harmonium, alternately on the mandolin. He will be doing most of the vocals, too.

Even if you understand neither Hindi nor Sanskrit, the meaning of the songs—when the trio does perform numbers with words—will not be entirely lost. You will know for sure whether they're just stirring up the atmosphere, as they do with lively *qawalis*, or stirring up the soul, as they do with lyrical *gazals*.

Between numbers they will tune their instruments if they must; otherwise there is need only to tune in to one another. You will intuit this as well.

When Punnu's eyes glazes over as his voice follows the direction of his left hand—up, up and higher—again you will know he is performing the closest thing to a prayer. He makes little effort to conceal it when he chants and you will not mind being drawn in.

Bollywood pop, too

Punnu, 33 and CJ, 35, are from Hyderabad in Central India. They came to the Philippines in 1992 and settled here. They are the leaders of a group called Sing India, and have been performing with Cynthia for two years now.

"With Cynthia, we play in *satsangs* (spiritual study groups) or at the Hindu temple in Paco," Punnu says. "Otherwise Sing India also does Indian cinema (Bollywood) pop for appropriate gatherings, mostly in Indian residences."

(They play Bollywood music at Bollywood Greenbelt on Wednesdays and Fridays.)

Cynthia has been described as a Philippine folk heroine who has refused to compromise her music for a pop hit. Her vocal styling has been compared to Natalie Merchant and Joni Mitchell. She has two albums under her belt, "Ripping Yarns" and "Comet Tails." Recently, she collaborated with her famous brother Joey Ayala, and Teatrong Mulat's Amelia Bonifacio on a recording of "Sita & Rama," which simplifies "The Ramayana" for children.

Clear path

A quick plug-in to these albums makes it rather clear where Cynthia's heart rests.

"I'm learning the tabla with CJ," she reveals. "And I'm also studying the sitar with Joey Valenciano. Did you know that the sitar and the guitar have the same configuration?"

As Cynthia Alexander, solo artist and band frontman, she played the rhythm guitar and bass. "Some friends have asked what I think I'm doing. They call this (Bollywood Greenbelt gig with Sing India) 'playing back-up.' But I love this music. I like it that I am so absorbed in what I am doing, I lose myself."

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
8th floor Shangrila Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: 633.2227 / 6337851 loc. 171
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR GP
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR GP
3 (DOLBY) MONSTER IN LAW PG13
4 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 (SDDS) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS) WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 GOLD (DTS) BATMAN BEGINS
5 GOLD (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
6 GOLD (SDDS) FANTASTIC FOUR
7 GOLD (DOLBY) HOTEL RWANDA
8 (DOLBY) MONSTER IN LAW
9 (DOLBY) CREEP
10 (DOLBY) NASAAN KA MAN

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 MONSTER IN LAW

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 MONSTER IN LAW

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 SHUTTER
3 (DOLBY) MR. & MRS. SMITH

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 HITCH HIKER'S GUIDE
2 RING OF NIBELUNGS
3 (DOLBY) MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 MONSTER IN LAW
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341924
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 (DOLBY) CREEP
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) SOON TO OPEN
2 SOON TO OPEN
3 SOON TO OPEN
4 SOON TO OPEN
5 SOON TO OPEN

Universal
(Manila) tel: 7334043 or 2470
1 FANTASTIC FOUR

MARRETHALE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 MONSTER IN LAW
4 CREEP

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 KALAPATI SA GABI
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) FANTASTIC FOUR
5 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 KALAPATI SA GABI

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 KALAPATI SA GABI
2 CREEP
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
6 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS EX) SHUTTER
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) BATMAN BEGINS
2 KALAPATI SA GABI
3 LARO SA BAGA
4 (DTS) CREEP

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS) SHUTTER
4 MONSTER IN LAW
5 LARO SA BAGA

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 PREMONITION
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007
1 (DOLBY) BATMAN BEGINS
2 RESERVED

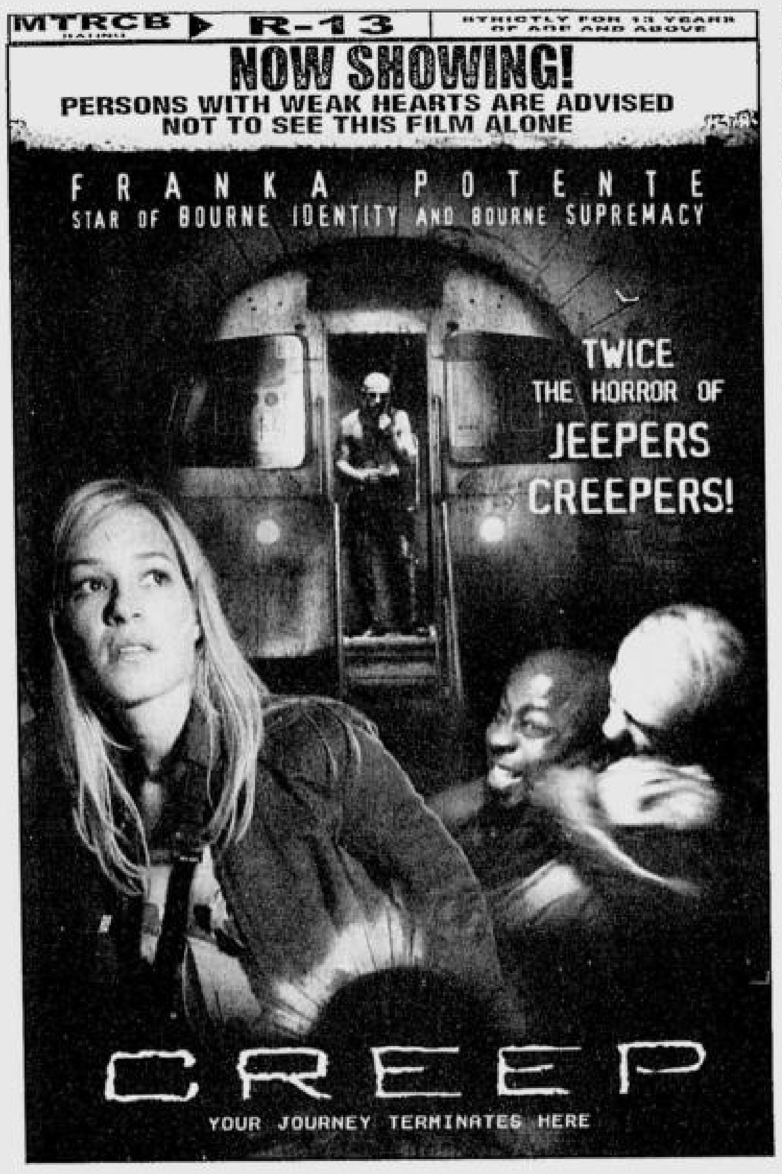
Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 SHUTTER
3 (DOLBY) HITCH HIKER'S GUIDE
4 (DTS) MR. & MRS. SMITH

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 SHAOLIN VS' EVIL DEAD
4 TAGOS SA LAMAN

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 HAPPILY EVER AFTER

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 KALAPATI SA GABI
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



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FANTASTIC FOUR

CINEMA SCHEDULES
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FREE SEATING P99
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P140 WAR OF THE WORLDS & BATMAN BEGINS
P150 FANTASTIC FOUR
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

MR & MRS SMITH
1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
WAR OF THE WORLDS
1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9.50
MONSTER IN LAW
1:10 / 3:50 / 6:30 / 9:10
FANTASTIC FOUR
12:10 / 12:50 / 1:30 / 3:00
3:40 / 4:20 / 5:50 / 6:30
7:10 / 8:40 / 9:20 / 10:00
BATMAN BEGINS
1:00 / 3:50 / 6:40 / 9:30
CREEP
12:35 / 2:45 / 4:55 / 7:05 / 9:15

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
ADMISSION · P 299 / Globe Platinum Subscribers P249
FANTASTIC FOUR
1:30 / 4:20 / 7:10 / 10:00

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ FANTASTIC FOUR
12:30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00
❷ WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:20 / 3:10 / 6:00 / 8:50
❸ BATMAN BEGINS
11:40 / 2:30 / 5:20 / 8:10
❹ KALAPATI SA GABI
❺ CREEP
11:30 / 1:40 / 3:50 / 6:00 / 8:10
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
2005 PBA CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS GAMES 3 & 4
July 6, Wed. & July 8, Fri Talk N Text vs San Miguel
UAAP OPENING CEREMONIES - GAMES
July 9, Sat. 1pm Opening / 2pm UP vs UST Srs/ 4pm FEU vs UE Srs
July 10, Sunday UAAP GAMES 10am AdU vs NU Jrs, 12pnn DLSU vs ADMU Jrs. 2pm AdU vs NU Srs, 4pm DLSU vs ADMU Srs
JOHN MAXWELL ASIAN TOUR 2005
July 22, Friday 6.00 pm

CENTER EVENTS
NEW STORES: Menage Salon at Level 3, Shiseido at Level 2, Teriyaki Boy at Level 3, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf at the Gateway Cineplex 10 Lobby
PERFORMANCES: Cadio, on July 8 Tropicana, on July 9 & Tots Tolentino, on July 10, at the Gateway Pavilion
EXHIBIT: Herbie: Fully Loaded life-size replica on display from July 7 to 13 at the Gateway Cineplex 10 lobby
SPECIAL APPEARANCE: Neil Gaiman Book Signing on July 11, 4pm at Fully Booked on Level 2 of Gateway Mall
LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

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Feminist awards for Gloria, Anita and Mona

THREE Philippine movie legends and yesteryears' screen godessess are set to receive today from President Macapagal-Arroyo the "PAMA-AS: Gintong Bai Award" ("Thank You To Outstanding Women Leaders").

The rites are set 9:30 a.m. at Malacañang Palace's Rizal Hall.

For "outstanding contributions and achievements to Philippine cinema," Gloria Borrego Galla (Gloria Romero), Alice Lake (Anita Linda) and Florida Lerma Yapco (Mona Lisa) will be honored with the Gintong Bai, otherwise known as "Lifetime Achievement Award: A Salute to Women in the Arts and Heritage Preservation," in celebration of the Centennial Year of the Feminist Movement of the Philippines.

The PAMA-AS is an initiative of the Office of the Presidential Advisor on Culture (Opac) and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) to honor eminent Filipinas 65 years and older.

"Women have contributed much to the development and preservation of Philippine arts and culture, yet many of them remain unrecognized. This award is an expression of the nation's appreciation for their services to the Filipino people in the various disciplines of media and broadcast arts, cinema, dance, literature, music, theater, visual arts, cultural heritage conservation and promotion of the Filipino language," Cecile Guidote-Alvarez, PA on Culture and NCCA executive director, said.

The other awardees are Fidela "Tia Dely" Mendoza Magpayo (Media and Broadcast Arts); Paz Cielo Belmonte and Corazon Iñigo (Dance); Gilda Cordero-Fernando, Genoveva Edrosa-Matute, Rosalindo Orosa and Azucena Grajo-Uranza (Literature).

Fides Santos Cuyugan-Asencio, Ernestina O. Crisologo and Carmencita Lozada (Music); Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio, Rustica C. Carpio and Natividad Crame-Rogers (Theater); Rosario L. Bitanga, Araceli Limcaoco-Dans, and Anita Magsaysay-Ho (Visual Arts); Sonia Santiago-Olivares (Visual Arts-Interior Design); Isabel Santos (Visual Arts-Costume Design).

Sister Delia Coronel (Promotion of Intangible Heritage-darangan Literature); Esperanza Bunag-Gatbonton and Ana Marie L. Harper (Conservation); Rosario Mendoza Cortez, Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil and Gloria Santos (Historian); Estefania Aldaba-Lim, Leonora San Agustin and Sister Nieves Valdez (Museum); and Consuelo Paz (Promotion of Filipino Language).

They will each receive a certificate of recognition, specially hand-embroidered "jusi" handkerchiefs and P10,000 in cash.

The board of judges consisted of National Museum Director Corazon Alvina, National Library Director Prudencia Cruz and NCCA Commissioners Felipe M. de Leon Jr., Atty. Rose Beatrix Angeles, Alfred Gabot and Carlo Ebeo.

President Arroyo will be assisted by Alvarez and NCCA Chair Ambeth R. Ocampo.

GLORIA Romero

ANITA Linda

RUDY ESPERAS

MONA Lisa

KATH de Guzman leaves tomorrow for Colombia tilt

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Pageant spectator picked for 'Maja'

WHO would think that watching a beauty pageant could launch one's own candidacy?

This was how it happened to 22-year-old Ma. Anna Kathrina "Kath" de Guzman, the country's representative to the Miss Maja Mundial pageant which is set in Colombia on July 23.

Five weeks ago, Kath was sitting in the audience during the Miss Philippines-Earth pageant at the University of the Philippines Theater in Quezon City, cheering for her younger sister Antonette Stephanie, who was eventually crowned Miss Philippines-Fire. A representative of the Pageant Enthusiast's Guild of the Philippines Inc. (PEGPI) spotted Kath, and asked if she would consider representing the Philippines in Miss Maja Mudial.

This pretty young woman has a degree in Humanities from the University of Asia and the Pacific and operates Coldstone Café in Eastwood City, Quezon City. Also, she is part-owner of Chi Asian Fusion restaurant in APC Magallanes.

She said she was planning to bring native delicacies, like *polvoron* and *pastillas*, to share with fellow candidates in Colombia.

Kath leaves tomorrow aboard Philippine Airlines. *Armin Adina*

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 FANTASTIC FOUR
MTRCB GP
12 10, 2 40, 5:10, 7 40, 10:10 LMF

2 FANTASTIC FOUR
MTRCB GP
11 10, 1 40, 4 10, 6 40, 9 10 LMF

3 MONSTER IN LAW
MTRCB PG-13
(Please call us for the time)

4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
MTRCB PG-13
12 00, 2 30, 5 00, 7 30, 10.00

PREMIERE THEATRE WAR OF THE WORLDS
MTRCB PG-13 11 00, 1 30, 4 00, 6 30, 9:00 LMF

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

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in advance starting July 1, 2005
No extra service fee
Regular screening begins July 6, 2005

Regular Ticket Price
Cinemas 1 to 4 - P150
Premiere Theatre - P295 (includes unlimited popcorn and beverage)
Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 / 633-4736 for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

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Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City

ADVANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE FOR FANTASTIC FOUR

For inquiries, call
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:20, 3:00, 5:40
8:20, 11:00
PG-13

2 FANTASTIC FOUR
11:00, 1:40, 7:00, 9:30
GP

3 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:20, 3:00, 5:40
8:20, 11:00
GP

4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
11:40, 2:20, 5:00
7:40, 10:20
PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13 1:40,4:10,6:40,9:10	FANTASTIC 4 GP 11:55,2:25,4:55,7:25,9:55	FANTASTIC 4 GP 11:20,1:50,4:20,6:50,9:20
WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13 12:20,2:50,5:20,7:50,10:20	MONSTER IN LAW PG13 1:20,3:30,5:50,8:10,10:20	FANTASTIC 4 GP 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30

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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
PG13
11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10

CINEMA 2 FANTASTIC 4
GP
11:15, 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 WAR OF THE WORLDS
PG13
12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10

CINEMA 4 FANTASTIC 4
GP
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

CINEMA 5 FANTASTIC 4
GP
10:30, 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00

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JULY 29 & 30 SOULSISTERS (Jessa, Marissa & Ara) 8PM
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movie schedules events promos

Here are the results for the last week's poll!
"What movies are you into?"
TOP FIVE MOVIES

Monster-in-law	★★★★★
War of the worlds	★★★★
Herbie Fully Loaded	★★★★
Fantastic Four	★★★
Happily Ever After	★★★

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Ice Princess
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FOR GUARANTEED SEATS

the podium 633-8976
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:10FS/12:40MF/03:00/05:20/07:40
09:25LFS/10:00LMF/12:15END
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
11:30FS/12:00MF/02:30/05:00/07:30
09:30LFS/10:00LMF/12:00END

megamall 633-1901
WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:10FS/12:40MF/03:40/06:40/
09:00LFS/09:40LMF/12:00END

cebu (032) 231-3876
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:10FS/12:30MF/02:40/04:50/07:00
08:55LFS/09:10LFS/11:05END
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
11:40FS/11:50MF/02:15/04:40/07:05
09:05LFS/09:30LMF/11:30END
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
10:40FS/10:50MF/01:00/03:10/05:20/07:30
09:25LFS/09:40LMF/11:35END

FEEL EXCLUSIVE Now SHOWING EXCLUSIVELY at SM CINEMA

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MAN OF THE HOUSE

Witness this hilarious comedy about a Texan ranger teamed up with cheerleaders! Watch it EXCLUSIVELY at SM Southmall today!

WAVE 89.1

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
BATMAN BEGINS
MR. & MRS. SMITH
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
WAR OF THE WORLDS
MONSTER-IN-LAW
9 CREEP
10 FANTASTIC FOUR
11 NASAAN KA MAN
12 HAPPILY EVER AFTER

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
HOTEL RWANDA
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
SHUTTER
WAR OF THE WORLDS
5 NASAAN KA MAN
6 MR. & MRS. SMITH
7 FANTASTIC FOUR
8 BATMAN BEGINS
9 MONSTER-IN-LAW
10 HAPPILY EVER AFTER
11 WAR OF THE WORLDS
12 CREEP

SM NORTH EDSA
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 MONSTER-IN-LAW
4 BATMAN BEGINS
5 WAR OF THE WORLDS
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

SM CITY MANILA
WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 MR. & MRS. SMITH
3 ICE PRINCESS
FANTASTIC FOUR
MONSTER-IN-LAW
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
WAR OF THE WORLDS
8 BATMAN BEGINS
9 NASAAN KA MAN
CREEP
11 SHUTTER
HAPPILY EVER AFTER

SM CITY STA MESA
WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 BATMAN BEGINS
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 CREEP
5 FANTASTIC FOUR
PREMONITION
7 NASAAN KA MAN
8 HAPPILY EVER AFTER
9 MONSTER-IN-LAW
10 MR. & MRS. SMITH

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 MAN OF THE HOUSE
3 WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR
5 NASAAN KA MAN
6 MR. & MRS. SMITH
HAPPILY EVER AFTER
8 BATMAN BEGINS
9 CREEP
10 MONSTER-IN-LAW

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
RESERVED
RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
CREEP
FANTASTIC FOUR
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
WAR OF THE WORLDS

SM CITY BICUTAN
FANTASTIC FOUR
WAR OF THE WORLDS
BATMAN BEGINS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
FANTASTIC FOUR
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
NASAAN KA MAN
HAPPILY EVER AFTER
5 HOTEL RWANDA
WAR OF THE WORLDS

SM CITY BACOOR
MONSTER-IN-LAW
HAPPILY EVER AFTER
FANTASTIC FOUR
BATMAN BEGINS
5 FANTASTIC FOUR
6 WAR OF THE WORLDS
7 NASAAN KA MAN
8 MR. & MRS. SMITH

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 HOTEL RWANDA
3 MONSTER-IN-LAW
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY BAGUIO
FANTASTIC FOUR
IN GOOD COMPANY
WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY MARILAO
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 COACH CARTER
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY LUCENA
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 UNLEASHED
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

SM CITY BATANGAS
WAR OF THE WORLDS
SHUTTER
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 SIN CITY

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
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GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 WAR OF THE WORLDS 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00	2 FANTASTIC 4 11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10					
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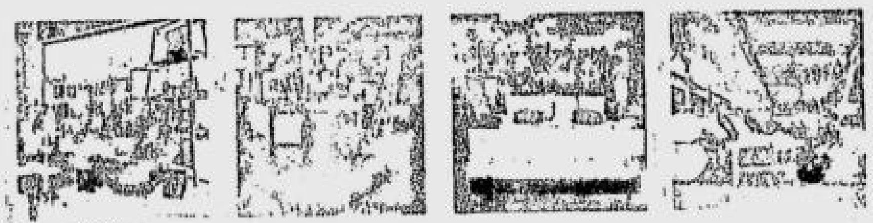

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ABS-CBN's loss is our gain—GMA 7 exec

By Marinel R. Cruz

WILMA Galvante

"THE COMPETITION'S loss is our gain," declared Wilma Galvante, GMA 7 vice president for TV Entertainment, when asked to comment about ABS-CBN's losses amounting to P141 million in the first quarter of the year.

"Business was good for us during the first quarter," Galvante told INQUIRER Entertainment in an exclusive interview at her office in Quezon City. "This was brought about by the increase in our ratings that began late last year. We are happy that we were able to sustain it."

Galvante said the ratings registered "a total turnaround" when GMA 7 launched the fantaserye "Mulawin" last August. "But even before that, we were No. 1 in terms of total day averaging. We just could not claim we were No. 1 at the time because we hadn't topped the soap block. We were prudent. Our order from the chair (Felipe L. Gozon) was to [first] win on all the blocks."

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

She pointed out that her team worked on accomplishing that goal, by "doing very well" in their programming.

"When we started working on the soap block, we knew that the competition had a big edge," said Galvante. "But that didn't deter us from producing more shows. We knew we had to start somewhere. So we went into 'soap' production, developed our expertise and learned from our previous projects."

With that as springboard, Galvante said, the network's climb to No. 1 was "unstoppable."

She explained: "Viewers' watching habits was also a big factor. At the start, the impression was that good soaps were produced only by the competition. So the programs we were producing, even if they were of good quality, were not being noticed."

Her network first saw its soap-block rating climb from 17 percent to 32 percent, Galvante said, when it launched "Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga," starring Dingdong Dantes and Tanya Garcia, in the last quarter of 2001. "The rival show was also good, so it was a neck-and-neck race," she added. "But we persevered; we refused to give in."

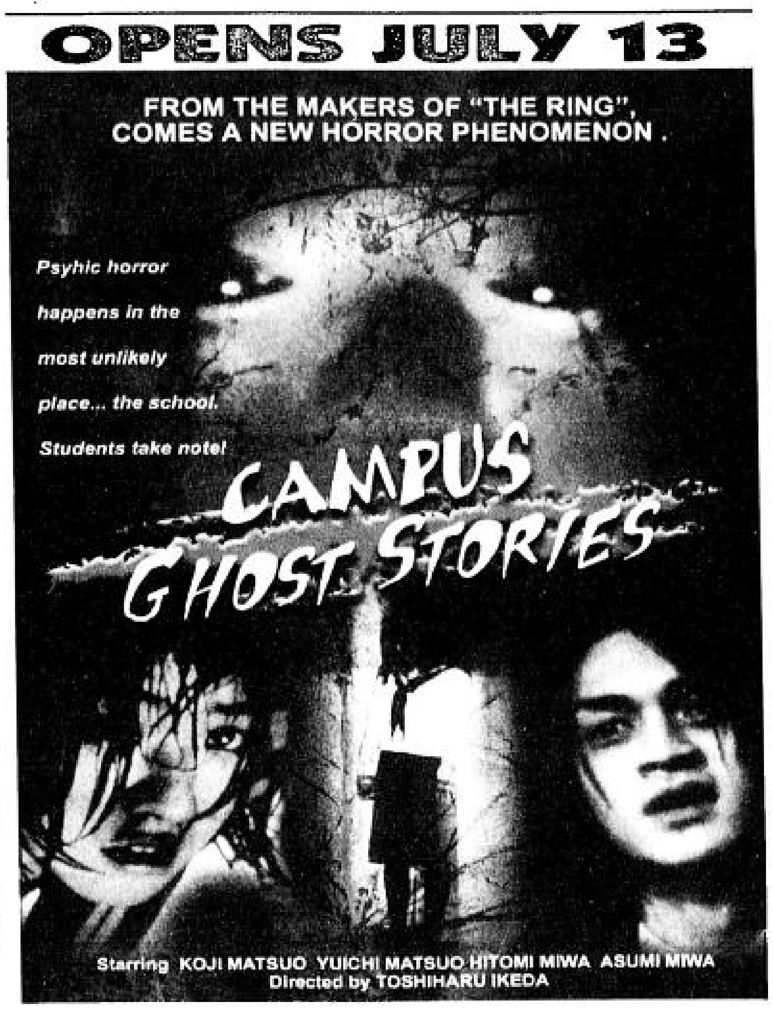
In April 2002, GMA 7 produced "Kung Mawawala Ka" starring Eddie Garcia. The show got good reviews, but the network still failed to make it to the top slot, recounted Galvante. "This was at the time when 'Extra Extra!' (then hosted by Paolo Bediones and Miriam Quiambao) was evolving into 'Extra Challenge.' This reality show really brought in the ratings. *Nagkakatulungan na ang mga* shows (It became a concerted effort). The audience was slowly getting interested."

The program flow further improved, she said, when the high ratings of "Extra Challenge" was followed by equally good ratings for "Mulawin." Then they introduced innovations, she said. "We sat down with people and scouted around for a dependable digital imaging group that could translate to video the kind of pictures that we were seeing in our heads."

Galvante said the goal was not just to air a program and make sure it rated well, but also to deliver viewer satisfaction. At this point, she hopes for only one thing: "That viewer interest does not deteriorate. People must have seen how much more we worked to improve our shows with 'Encantadia.' *Masarap panoorin, maganda sa mata* (Great to watch, easy on the eyes)."

Of their latest adventure-series, "Sugo" (whose pilot episode aired on July 4), Galvante said, "No one wants to overdose on fantasy programs."

Galvante concluded: "This success we're experiencing did not happen overnight. This came about because we were very focused on winning."



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Felicitous fusion of outstanding theater and visual artists

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

RYAN Cayabyab's new religious musical, "Mapaghimalang Birhen ng Caysasay, opens its run tonight with a premiere performance at the Little Theater of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, starring **Ogie Alcasid** as Haybing, the Chinese stonemason who was decapitated in the 16th century, then brought back to life through the prayerful intercession of Our Lady of Caysasay. Ogie's other performances are on July 8.

The musical has been mounted by devotees led by well-known sculptor Ramon Orlina to spread the Virgin's message and tradition all over the country, and to encourage viewers to develop their spirituality, especially in these trying times.

The musical's lead players include **Cocoy Laurel** (he plays Haybing on July 9 and 10), **Ivy Violan**, **Tommy Abuel**, **Araceli Dans**, **Lou Veloso**, **Rito Asilo**, **Andy Bais**, **Jane Diaz**, **Albert Jimenez**, **Myk Torre** and **Elijah Castillo**. They join Ogie and the musical's producers in hoping that their show will have a positive spiritual effect on viewers, as it has in their own lives while rehearsing for the presentation.

Another unique aspect of "Mapaghimalang Birhen ng Caysasay" is its felicitous fusion of outstanding theater and visual artists. This fusion has created a special bond among the musical's participants that has added to the production's artistry.

The show's executive producer, **Ramon Orlina**, is acclaimed as a glass sculptor and arts leader both here and abroad. Aside from being an international theater star, Cocoy Laurel is a gifted painter and portraitist.

Araceli Dans is famous for her *calado*-inspired paintings and portraits, and as a pioneering arts educator. Production designer Leo Rialp is a fine visual artist who has had exhibits here and abroad. And some other members of the musical's cast and creative staff, like composer Ryan Cayabyab, also have a proclivity for sketching and painting.

These artists speak a special theater and visual arts language that makes their creative interaction in the show especially choice. And they are happy to speak and sing in this special language in honor of Our Lady of Caysasay, and the important role she plays in the lives of the residents of Taal, Batangas, its environs, and elsewhere.

"Birhen ng Caysasay" is sponsored by Metrobank Foundation, PLDT, Guess by Marciano, Ma-Cho Temple (San Fernando, La Union), dwWW, Veritas 846-Radyo Veritas, Our Lady of Caysasay Foundation, Western Union Money Transfer, Modex Realty, and Ortigas and Company Limited Partnership. Call 891-9999 or Ramon Orlina at 781-5918.

Movies on TV

ON HBO today at 9:40 a.m., "Doc Hollywood." 10:45 p.m., "Punch-Drunk Love." July 8 at 6 a.m., "My Little Eye." 5:50 p.m., "Wilder Days." 12:05 a.m., "Carnivale: The Day That Was the Day."

On Cinemax today at 3 p.m., "For Whom the Bell Tolls." 12:10 a.m., "A Soldier's Story."

'Deadly Women'

BEGINNING July 27 at 10 p.m., Discovery Channel telecasts "Deadly Women," its incursion into the dark world of female murderers. Spanning four centuries and seven countries, each episode of the three-part series explores the true stories behind four murders perpetrated by women.

Fusing forensic fact, chilling storytelling and atmospheric period drama, "Deadly Women" introduces viewers to some of history's most notorious femme fatales, and features commentaries from **Candice DeLong**, a former FBI agent and profiler. as well as Dr. **Janis Amatuzio**, a forensic pathologist.

Included in the lineup is Countess Bathory of 17th-century Slovakia, who murdered hundreds of girls; the Black Widows, a group of women who caused more than 300 deaths in a hospital in Vienna, Austria; Madame Lalaurie, a socialite in 19th-century New Orleans who kept a torture chamber in her attic; Australian **Katherine Knight** who stabbed her partner repeatedly and then cooked his body parts; and **Blanche Taylor-Moore**, who slowly poisoned her lover with peanut butter milkshakes until he died.

'The African King'

AIRING as part of "Action Big Cats" on Animal Planet, "The African King" follows the harsh and competitive life of Addo, a male lion born into a successful pride. When two strange males invade the pride's territory, Addo escapes death, learns the grueling realities of survival, and becomes a powerful adult.

This unique program about loneliness and brotherhood, exile and survival, and power and leadership will be telecast at 8 p.m. on July 14, with replay at 4 p.m. on July 16.

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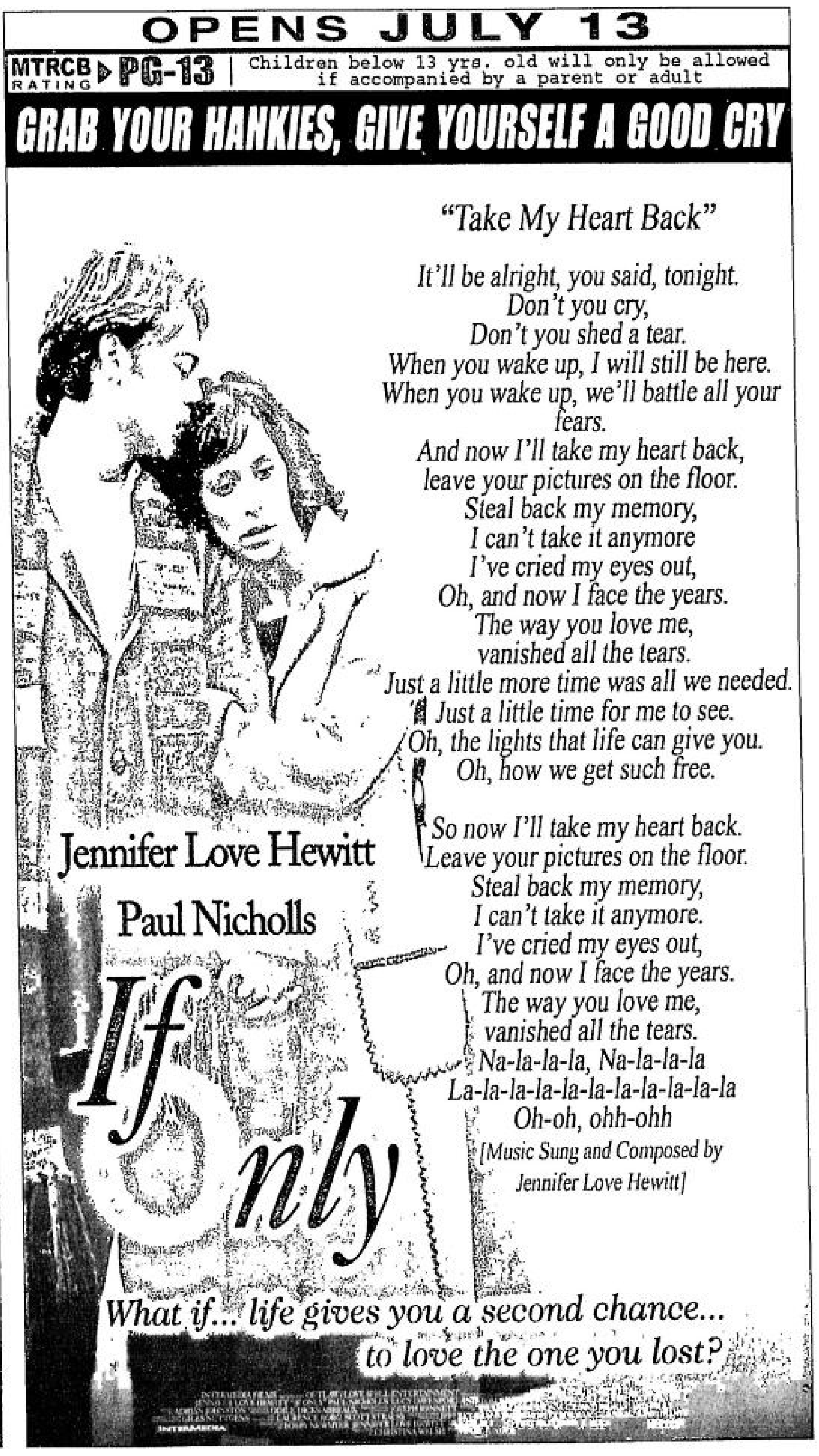

OPENS JULY 13
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GRAB YOUR HANKIES, GIVE YOURSELF A GOOD CRY
"Take My Heart Back"
It'll be alright, you said, tonight.
Don't you cry,
Don't you shed a tear.
When you wake up, I will still be here.
When you wake up, we'll battle all your tears.
And now I'll take my heart back,
leave your pictures on the floor.
Steal back my memory,
I can't take it anymore
I've cried my eyes out,
Oh, and now I face the years.
The way you love me,
vanished all the tears.
Just a little more time was all we needed.
Just a little time for me to see.
Oh, the lights that life can give you.
Oh, how we get such free.

So now I'll take my heart back.
Leave your pictures on the floor.
Steal back my memory,
I can't take it anymore.
I've cried my eyes out,
Oh, and now I face the years.
The way you love me,
vanished all the tears.
Na-la-la-la, Na-la-la-la
La-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la
Oh-oh, ohh-ohh
[Music Sung and Composed by Jennifer Love Hewitt]
Jennifer Love Hewitt
Paul Nicholls
If Only
What if... life gives you a second chance... to love the one you lost?

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THE LAST WAR ON EARTH WON'T BE STARTED BY HUMANS
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MTRCB RATING PG-13
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OPENS JULY 13
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Reader plays investigative reporter

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

JAMES Yap with Paula Garcia. "They have been together for a long time," our intrepid reader claims.

JUST GOT an e-mail—with photographs of **James Yap** and a girl who's not his fiancée **Kris Aquino**—from a reader who seems privy to the cager's personal affairs. This is a reaction to an item I wrote about the couple last week in my column titled, "Does James Yap have a Paula, too?"

The e-mail sender says Paula's full name is **Paula S. Garcia** and that she is not from Bacolod. "She comes from a very wealthy family in Marikina," the e-mail says, adding that the family owns a big shoe factory.

"She was not aware of the affair of James Yap with Kris Aquino and she refuses to be in the spotlight," the e-mail, sent from the e-mail address master_strokes1@yahoo.com, adds. "James Yap is not the boy-next-door that people think he is. He likes chinitas and fair-skinned women. Paula is only 20 years old, much younger than other women he has been involved with."

The e-mail claims that James and Paula have been "together for a long time, [including the period of] 'courtship' between James [and] Kris."

Although he or she sent the telling snapshots—and this sort of makes us raise a brow—the e-mail sender requests that Paula not be put in a spot because "she doesn't want to be part of the circus"!

The photographs are allegedly "proof of [the couple's] relationship through the years."

The e-mail ends on a note of suspicion: "There is more to James than meets the eye. Who knows what his intentions really are?"

Unfinished business

News about Kris and James' wedding plans have been making headlines, but anything can still happen. Hopefully James will resolve whatever unfinished business he has, so that he and Kris can love happily ever after. The ball is now in James' court. But does he have the guts to fight for Kris ... or Paula?

But I saw them!

I've been swamped with e-mail from fans of **Richard Gutierrez** after I wrote that I caught him and his non-show biz girlfriend in an unguarded moment during the taping of "Nuts" when my son IC and I were guests on the show. Richard has been quoted in tabloids saying that I made up that story. It's Richard's prerogative to deny. I respect that. But I really did see them with my own eyes! So did IC. If Richard had asked me to keep that off the record, I would have. **Carmina Villaroel,** whom I was chatting with in the dressing room at that time, can attest to that. We were seated by the makeshift dresser while Richard and his girl were lost in their own world near the comfort room. I'm not being defensive ... just factual.

Two realities?

When I saw Richard at the press con of "Sugo" recently, I even teased him "You were surprised with what I wrote? It's like I have eyes at the back of my head; that's why I spotted you and your girlfriend without your realizing it?" He seemed cool about it; he didn't reprimand me at all.

Richard may have his own reasons for wanting to hide the truth from other writers when asked about his girlfriend. Let's just leave it at that. Just like his dual character in "Sugo," maybe he has two sets of reality.

Speaking of Richard, I cornered his feisty mom, **Tita Annabelle,** and asked pointblank if she approved of his girlfriend. She smiled, "*Oo naman* (But of course)!" Then in her patented style, she urged me and the other writers around to plug the concert she's producing, "Ogie Alcasid LIVE at the Dusit Hotel" (Saturday, July 9). The show is sponsored by GMA 7, Play & Display, Don Henrico's, Bench, Card One and Funhaus) Joining Ogie are **Regine Velasquez, Rachel Ann Go** and **Ruffa Mae Quinto.** What an explosive combination! Watching Ogie is always pure rapture, so don't miss this. For tickets, call Royale Era, 727-2534 or 727-2536. Who knows? You might just spot Richard and his girlfriend there. Not too mention other celebrity couples. Denials galore on the next talk show.

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'Star in a Million' judges can already pick final 12

Apart from the cash prize, the young hopefuls dream of stardom and, of course, the chance to sing to the world

By Nini Valera

THIS EARLY, the three judges in ABS-CBN'S "Search for the Star in a Million" already have an idea which among the top 30 contestants will make it to the final 12 five weeks from now.

"I already have my top 12," said Wyngard Tracy during the press launch of the talent search last week.

Dubbed the Simon Cowell of "Search for a Star" because of his stinging remarks when a contestant lacks talent and star quality, Tracy made this disclosure with a poker face—exactly the way his British counterpart would drop a bomb.

He warned the 30 new hopefuls that he would be more critical this time around than he was in the first season.

Agot Isidro, another judge, admitted that she had 12 finalists in mind, but that they were not yet final.

"I change my [mental] list every time I see them perform," she said.

Director Rowell Santiago, the third judge, noted that this year's contestants worked very hard, so it was not easy for him, either, to choose the top 12 this early in the game. Like Isidro, Santiago said, his list changed with each encounter.

Tales of sacrifice

This year, the contestants' age range was changed from 14 to 19, to 18 to 25. This means that more mature amateur singers, and even semi-professionals, were eligible.

But the contest was also made tougher. The 30 finalists were divided into six groups of five members each. Into the contest proper, each group will have a showdown, and two survivors per round will consist the final 12.

Last Sunday, Tong dela Paz and Joey Ignacio topped the initial showdown to become the first two in the magic dozen.

The contestants all have stories of sacrifice to tell. Some dropped out of college this semester to join the search.

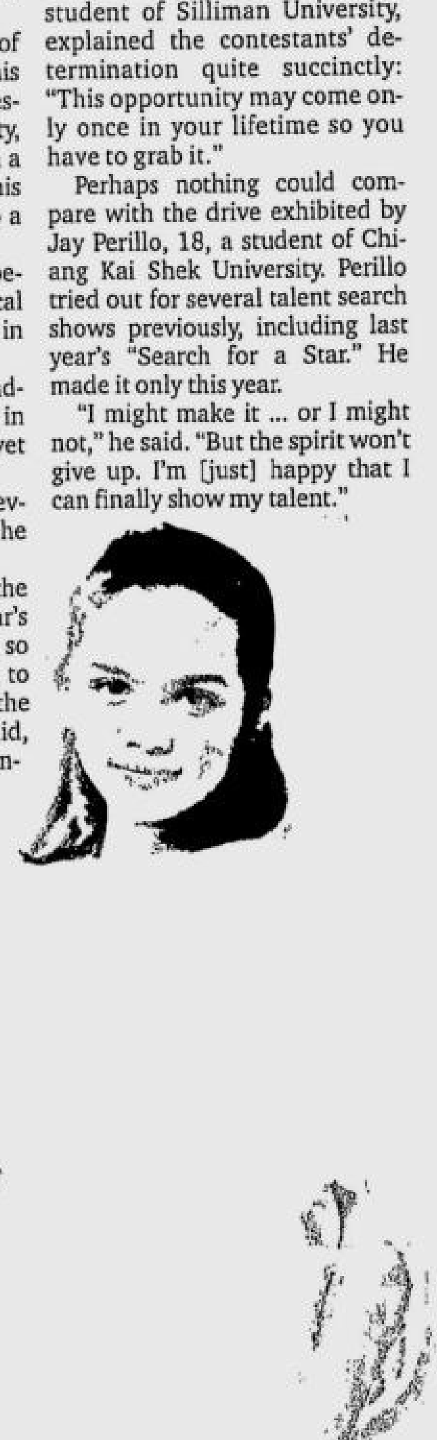
A male working student gave up his part-time job. A female contestant from Bacolod confessed that she spent her tuition money for the fare to Manila.

The 30 contestants are billeted in a two-star hotel, five to a room. Free meals are provided only during workshops and tapings.

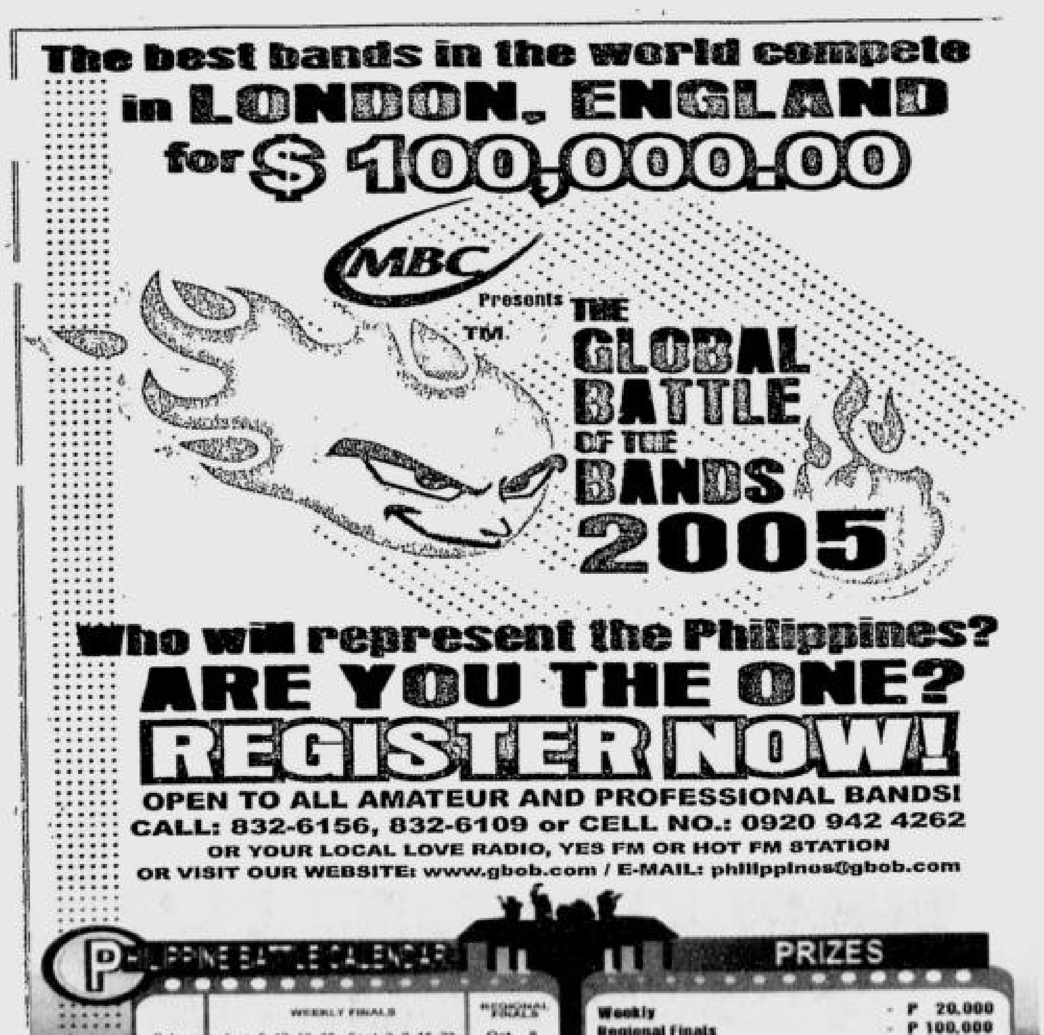
Joy Cane, 16, of Agusan del Sur, a Mass Communications student of Silliman University, explained the contestants' determination quite succinctly: "This opportunity may come only once in your lifetime so you have to grab it."

Perhaps nothing could compare with the drive exhibited by Jay Perillo, 18, a student of Chiang Kai Shek University. Perillo tried out for several talent search shows previously, including last year's "Search for a Star." He made it only this year.

"I might make it ... or I might not," he said. "But the spirit won't give up. I'm [just] happy that I can finally show my talent."



JOY Cane is one of the favorites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PHILIPPINE BATTLE CALENDAR

	WEEKLY FINALS	REGIONAL FINALS
Cebu	Aug. 5, 12, 19, 26 - Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23	Oct. 8
Davao	Aug. 12, 19, 26 - Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Oct. 15
Baguio	Aug. 19, 26 - Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 - Oct. 7	Oct. 22
Manila	Aug. 5, 12, 19, 26 - Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 - Oct. 7, 14	Oct. 27

PRIZES

Weekly		₱ 20,000
Regional Finals		₱ 100,000
Grand National Finals	1st Prize	₱ 500,000
	2nd Prize	₱ 300,000
	3rd Prize	₱ 200,000

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

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Fiscal crisis looms due to VAT freeze

BUSINESS leaders warned yesterday that a Supreme Court injunction against President Macapagal-Arroyo's key tax reform measure could drive the Philippines closer to a financial crisis.

The court on Friday indefinitely suspended the collection of an expanded value-added tax (VAT) that took effect on the same day, citing a challenge to its legality.

The government promptly appealed the interim ruling but the court voted to keep the injunction in place on Tuesday pending a hearing on the issue.

The Makati Business Club expressed "grave concern and disappointment with the Supreme Court's decision," calling it "a big setback to the governments effort to raise revenues as part of its fiscal reform program."

It called for a swift resolution of the VAT issue "in order to avert a serious fiscal crisis from getting even worse in the near future."

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima has said the government stood to lose P5 billion a month in revenues.

The ruling "comes at an urgent time when the country needs to put in place every revenue enhancement and cost management measure to plug an increasing budget deficit," the Makati business group said.

"On top of the revenue losses, the Supreme Courts decision once again sends negative signals to investors about the instability and unpredictability of economic policy and legislation."

Cora Guidote, a senior economic adviser to President Arroyo, said international ratings agencies Fitch and Standard and Poor's have "expressed concern about a prolonged delay" in the tax collection as it would "weaken the country's fiscal reform program, which, in turn, could erode investor confidence."

The Asian Development Bank said it was also poised to cut its growth forecast for the Philippines to below 5 percent for this year amid setbacks to its fiscal reforms and soaring oil prices.

But the country is not on the brink of a financial crisis despite the economic problems and despite political turmoil that includes calls for President Arroyo to step down, said the ADB's country officer, Tom Crouch.

Stocks have taken a beating while the peso has tumbled to a near-record low following the Supreme Court's decision.

Crouch said the ADB in April predicted Philippines' economic growth would moderate to 5 percent for 2005 and 2006, but is likely to revise its projection down below 5 percent given the fresh developments.

Gross domestic product expanded 6.1 percent last year, the highest rate in 15 years. But Crouch noted first-quarter growth this year already has slowed to 4.6 percent from 6.4 percent in the same period last year.

A slowdown in the world economy, softer demand for Philippines' exports, sustained higher global oil prices and rising international interest rates exacerbate the country's woes, he said.

"While the suspension of the e-VAT is a serious setback, it need not be totally

FISCAL/ B3

WHAT'S INSIDE

Breaktime: Two peas in a fraud /B2

CAP told to tend to unpaid claims /B2

EPCIBank unit faces sanctions /B8

Gov't to revert oil tariff to 5%

By Michelle V. Remo

MALACAÑANG will issue an executive order bringing back the tariff on imported oil products from 3 to 5 percent, a move resulting from the temporary restraining order issued by the Supreme Court on the expanded value-added tax law.

Finance Assistant Secretary Gil Beltran said the executive order would be issued immediately to avoid revenue losses from a lower oil tariff.

Malacañang issued an EO reducing the tariff to 3 percent as a measure to mitigate the impact of the E-VAT law on consumers, which was supposed to take effect last July 1.

Beltran said that since a TRO was issued against the implementation of the e-VAT law, oil tariffs should revert to 5 percent and Malacañang would have to issue a new EO to implement this.

He said that without the E-VAT, the government would be losing P2.5 billion in revenues from July to December this year, or about P400 million a day, if the oil tariff would remain at 3 percent.

The e-VAT law basically sought for an expanded coverage of the tax to include other services and products, such as oil and electricity. The law also gave the President a stand-by authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent next in 2006.

The Department of Finance estimated that the e-VAT law would generate as much as P31 billion in the second half of this year and P105 billion annually starting next year.

The TRO against the law was issued late Friday, its first day of effectivity, following the filing of a petition by opposition lawmakers. The petitioners questioned the constitutionality of giving the President an authority to raise the VAT rate.

Peso recovers to 56.18 to $1

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO took a respite yesterday after taking a heavy beating in the past few days over concerns on fiscal and political uncertainties—and without any intervention from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, currency traders said.

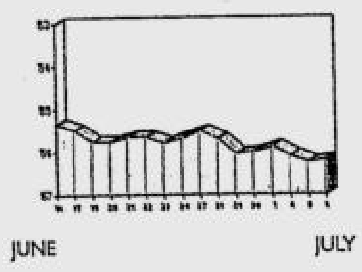
The oversold currency closed firmer at 56.18 against the US dollar after trading between an intraday low of 56.225 and 56.02 at the

PESO/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



₱ 56.180 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., July 6, 2005

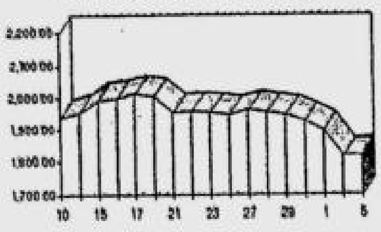
¥ 111.64 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., July 6, 2005

GOLD: $424.50-425.00
per ounce Hong Kong, July 6, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Stocks trading in 'uncertainty mode'

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARE prices closed down 0.2 percent yesterday at a six-month low as political concerns undercut sentiment and prompted investors to take quick profits on select blue-chips, dealers said.

They said the market was struggling to hold onto any gains given the calls for President Macapagal-Arroyo to quit in the face of allegations of vote rigging in last year's elections and corruption by her family.

The Supreme Court's suspension of a just passed law to increase revenues collected under value-added tax (VAT) added to the negative tone since it was seen as badly compromising Ms Arroyo's efforts to remedy a chronic budget deficit.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 3.98 points to 1,813.04 after trading between 1,808.92 and 1,822.38. This was the lowest finish since Dec. 23, 2004, when it settled at 1,807.49.

Volume was 298.43 million shares worth P1.3 billion. The broader all-shares index ended 0.56 points lower at 1,121.75.

Despite the headline index loss, gainers led losers 37 to 21 on rotational buying in some small-capitalized stocks, while 45 stocks ended unchanged.

Ms Arroyo faces impeachment charges as the opposition steps up a campaign to topple her over allegations she cheated to win the May 2004 elections.

AFP

JULY 1-31, 2005.

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Two peas in a fraud

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

WARNING to those who are having breakfast: SOME ITEMS IN THIS PIECE ARE UTTERLY REVOLTING.

The Go family—who got control of the country's third largest bank, Equitable PCI—never shed even a single cross-eyed centavo when, about six years ago, the family acquired the former Philippine Commercial International Bank.

Once again with feelings: Not a single centavo!

Such is the latest news on the well-guarded secrets of the Go family, newly unearthed by board members of Equitable PCI, who are on an apparent crusade to clean up the bank.

Claiming they own 25 percent of the bank, the Go family occupies five seats in the 15-man board, on top of the three seats for the alleged "independent" directors, plus one seat supposedly for management.

On the other hand, while it owns close to 40 percent of the bank, the government at present also has five seats in the same 15-man board.

As you know the government-run pension funds SSS and GSIS invested in the bank some P16 billion of the retirement money of millions upon millions of its members.

Oops, that means you and me! That is our money!

And what have we got to show for it? Well, for one, the market price of the bank's shares has shrunk by half!

Don't throw up yet. There's more.

* * *

NOW they are saying that our pension funds are in trouble, particularly the SSS, even though, under the law, anybody who works is forced to become a member.

Look at that, we have no choice. Whether we like it or not, we have to become members of a failing pension fund.

Studies after studies show that the SSS, with its present funds, could not possibly pay for all the future benefits of its members.

It simply means that WE, the members, are f…ked!

The beauty of it all is that we are bleeding—by the billions upon billions of pesos, at that—in our fantasy of an "investment" in that Go family-controlled Equitable PCI.

What a reward to the Go family! And all because the family did not have to put up a single centavo in the PCI Bank acquisition!

As you know, that same acquisition is the theoretical joint venture undertaken six years ago by the Go family on the one hand, and the SSS and the GSIS on the other.

At that time, the SSS and GSIS were set to invest in PCIBank, in a fifty-fifty joint venture with Metrobank taipan George Ty.

All of a sudden, the Go family kicked out George 'Ty, and the family became the partner of the pension funds. Each side was supposed to chip in P16 billion into the deal.

Using our retirement money, the SSS and the GSIS together made good their end of the deal, putting in hard cash.

The Go family put in their … well, perhaps, their prayer.

* * *

BASED on the latest findings of board members of Equitable PCI, the following is how the Go family acquired control of PCIBank without shedding even a twisted centavo.

The family committed what seemed to be a fraudulent arrangement in two pea steps. What is that? Two peas in a fraud?

As the owner of the former Equitable Bank, which eventually merged with PCIBank, the Go family was able to use the money of the pre-merger Equitable Bank.

After the merger of PCIBank and Equitable Bank, the Go family then used the "liquidity" of the other bank, PCI Bank, which the family was about to control under the merger. Bright!

Using Equitable Bank funds, the Go family advanced close to P7 billion to a subsidiary known as EBC Investment, which paid for a portion of their SUPPOSED P16-billion contribution to the PCIBank acquisition.

The rest of about P9 billion, the Go family borrowed from a foreign investment house, the one known as J.P. Morgan. Hmm …

The Go family formed a foreign company for the loan, which was incorporated in one of those haven for corporations with secret owners.

With the merger of the two banks, the Go family also got control of the PCIBank funds. Without much ado, thank you, the Go family then went on to use the same PCIBank funds to pay off the loan.

All told, the entire P16-billion contribution of the Go family in the joint venture was partly gotten from Equitable Bank and was partly paid for by PCIBank.

In other words, all those were the funds of the merged Equitable PCI which, under the joint venture with the Go family, the SSS and the GSIS paid for with our hard-earned money.

That's the money that we are forced to contribute to the pension funds, instead of our using it to buy a little supper of *tuyo*.

* * *

NOW, the P9-billion loan of the Go family, the one arranged by JP Morgan, again paid for part of the P16 billion which the Go family was supposed to put into the joint venture.

Eventually, PCIBank and Equitable Bank merged.

Nevertheless, the P7-billion "advance" of Equitable Bank (now part of Equitable PCI) to its subsidiary EBC Investment remains simply as … well, an "advance."

That "advance" now represents some 10 percent interest in the merged Equitable PCI.

That same 10 percent interest is what the Go family has been using all this time to vote directors to the board to keep their control over the bank.

And so let me say it again: We, the members of the pension funds, actually invested P16 billion of our hard-earned money in the bank, forcibly taken from us by the government, supposedly for our benefit.

It has benefit, and will continue to benefit, the Go family instead.

How could this have happened? Somebody in the SSS please explain this to us.

And everybody thought we have a top-notch accountant in the SSS.

I mean, how could this anomaly, this apparent fraud, have remained hidden from our brilliant managers at the SSS and the GSIS? Stupidity or corruption? Take your pick.

* * *

IN the end, we are paying for this anomaly.

Remember, *kumander*, the Go family used P16 billion of our funds to pay for their contribution into the joint venture.

That is P16 billion of our joint-venture money that is not earning for the bank. Again, the money used by the Go family is not earning anything for the bank.

If the money was put in a no-brainer investment, such as T-bills, it could have earned about 10 percent a year.

That means we are foregoing some P1.6 billion in earnings from the money the Go family used to gain control of the bank that the family, in effect, raided.

And the Go family has been using the funds for the past six years. In effect, we have given up more than P8 billion already.

Since we own 36 percent of the bank, we were actually robbed of some P3 billion, and still counting.

Finally, as I said, the market price of Equitable PCI has dropped to half of its original price when the SSS and the GSIS made their investments.

Why is that? Because the stock market can see that the bank, compared to other banks of its size, is not posting profits nearly as much as the others.

One reason, as the market fully knows, is that a good part of its fund is not earning anything for the bank.

That, of course, is the good part that the Go family used to finance their part in the joint venture.

And so, even if we want to get out of this fraudulent arrangement with the Go family, we must take a big hit when we sell our investment. We get only half of our money.

Now, quickly, you can run to the toilet to be sick!

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CAP told to tend to unpaid claims of plan holders

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

MORE than 100 plan holders of the College Assurance Plan Philippines are urging the troubled pre-need firm to settle their tuition requirements, requests for termination of policies and reimbursements, some of which date back from October 2004.

Sources told the INQUIRER that the non-traditional securities department of the Securities and Exchange Commission would soon take action to compel CAP to address the complaints of the 110 plan holders.

CAP has 720,000 plan holders to date.

According to a source at CAP, the pre-need firm has given priority to plans that cover students enrolled since October last year. Most of the unsettled claims consist of termination requests.

The money CAP will use to pay for the plans will largely come from collections from old plan holders, the source said. At present, the SEC has not renewed CAP's license to sell education plans.

According to sources at the SEC, there is no word yet from CAP regarding the foreign investor that is supposed to infuse $12.5 million into the pre-need firm.

Also, the takeover of CAP's management now becomes likely after the Securities and Exchange Commission en banc voted to accept the recommendations of its third oversight committee.

SEC Commissioner Jesus Martinez earlier told senators that the commission had already accepted the committee recommendation, outlining drastic measures to solve CAP's financial problems. The commissioners also voted four-to-one, to form a management committee that would immediately take over the operations of CAP.

But Enrique Sobrepeña Jr., CAP president, said that the decision of the SEC "was not made properly" since CAP was not given enough opportunity to present its side and correct the misimpression about the pre-need firm.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 6, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	2,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	30	30.5	30	30.5	1,641,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45.5	46	45	45	1,230,500
China Banking Corp.	770	770	770	770	500
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	320,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	46.5	47	46.5	47	76,400
International Exch. Bank	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.5	13,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	25.5	26	25.5	26	1,174,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	5,000
Security Bank Corp.	23.5	25.5	23.5	25.5	1,329,600
Union Bank of the Phil.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	10,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	265	265	265	265	200
Manulife Financial Corp.	2600	2620	2600	2620	550
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	540,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1830	1830	1825	1825	180
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.5	90,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.97	0.99	0.96	0.97	1,200,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	805	805	800	800	61,580
Ipeople Inc.	3.65	3.7	3.6	3.6	129,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	600,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.48	2.48	2,052,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1525	1545	1525	1530	238,350
Philweb Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	3,400,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14	14.5	14	14	49,900
Manila Electric Co. B	22	23.5	22	23.5	2,352,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.2	2,453,000
Petron Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	4,372,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	26,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	900,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	3,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	240,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	200,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	1,896,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	13,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	5,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	28.5	27	27	72,800
San Miguel Corp. A	59	60	59	60	51,300
San Miguel Corp. B	91.5	91.5	91	91.5	222,100
Universal Robina Corp.	16	16	16	16	251,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	17,000,000
Ayala Corp.	280	280	270	272.5	232,060
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.6	551,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	6,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.84	1.84	1,180,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	50,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.93	0.98	0.93	0.98	15,230,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.26	2.28	2.26	2.26	1,246,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	22,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.2	650,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	38.5	39.5	38.5	38.5	2,367,300
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	30,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.065	0.0725	0.065	0.0725	900,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	300,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	251,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.9	1.92	1.9	1.92	190,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.14	2,669,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	18,250,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.17	2,200,000
SM Investments Corp.	252.5	255	250	255	613,850
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.16	770,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.2	1.22	100,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	80,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	1,000,000
Pryce Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	570,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.02	2,638,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	7.4	7.4	6	6	6,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	100,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	1,026,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.25	0.29	0.25	0.29	110,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	854,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series K	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	11,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7	7.1	7	7	29,836,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	560,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	4,710,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.17	0.205	0.17	0.18	1,870,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	1,560,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.26	2,898,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	600,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	10,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	700,000
SM Development Corp.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.44	99,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.1	7.2	5,888,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co., Inc. A	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	150,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.006	0.006	0.0055	0.006	93,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.8	52,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	6,000,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	3,850,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	10,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.018	24,600,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.88	0.89	0.87	0.87	1,510,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	24.25	24.5	24.25	24.5	299,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	4,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	200,000

CURRENCIES

July 6, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.838785	1.000000	56.1750
Japan	Yen	0.007513	0.008957	0.5032
United Kingdom	Pound	1.474249	1.757600	98.7332
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.107930	0.128674	7.2283
Switzerland	Franc	0.643833	0.767578	43.1187
Canada	Dollar	0.674807	0.804505	45.1931
Singapore	Dollar	0.494888	0.590005	33.1435
Australia	Dollar	0.621460	0.740905	41.6203
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.225013	2.652661	149.0132
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.223676	0.266667	14.9800
Brunei	Dollar	0.493432	0.588270	33.0461
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000101	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020202	0.024085	1.3530
UAE	Dirham	0.228384	0.272279	15.2953
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.192200	66.9718
Argentina	Peso	0.290740	0.346620	19.4714
Brazil	Real	0.355147	0.423406	23.7848
Denmark	Kroner	0.134182	0.159972	8.9864
India	Rupee	0.019260	0.022962	1.2899
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220762	0.263193	14.7849
Mexico	New Peso	0.077934	0.092913	5.2194
New Zealand	Dollar	0.566785	0.675721	37.9586
Norway	Kroner	0.126380	0.150670	8.4639
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014069	0.016773	0.9422
South Africa	Rand	0.122183	0.145666	8.1828
Korea	Won	0.000798	0.000951	0.0534
Sweden	Kroner	0.106177	0.126584	7.1109
Syria	Pound	0.016158	0.019264	1.0822
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026195	0.031230	1.7543
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000391	0.000466	0.0262

Peso recovers . . .

From page B1

Philippine Dealing System.

Even amid continuing worries over the fate of President Macapagal-Arroyo and her fiscal reform program after the Supreme Court's order to freeze the value added tax implementation, the peso managed to gain 6.5 centavos yesterday after closing at a six-month low of 56.245 on Tuesday.

Local traders said the market had corrected after consecutive days of losses, as some banks found an opportunity to lock in profits from their dollar positions in anticipation of the greenback's weakening.

"There's no appetite to buy more dollars," one dealer said.

Dealers said the US dollar was bound to soften considering the peso's gains yesterday without the BSP having to shell out more dollars in its defense.

"The banks took it as a signal that it's time to sell (dollars). Since last week, they have been holding their dollar positions too long," the dealer added.

Value turnover at the Philippine Dealing System stood at $352.5 million yesterday. •

BPI sells ₱2.4B worth of NPLs

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANK of the Philippine Islands clinched a deal to sell P2.4 billion worth of nonperforming loans to the Amroc group, one of the largest private debt trading and investment management firms in the US.

The agreement, which was signed last Monday, did not qualify for fiscal incentives under the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) Act that expired last April, BPI senior vice president for asset recovery management group Senen Matoto said in an interview yesterday.

But Matoto said the deal with Amroc did not need any fiscal incentives to push through.

"The portfolio sold consisted of unsecured NPLs so that the kind of transaction costs are not significant compared to the transfer costs if the loans were secured," Matoto said.

It was the second time that BPI had made a bulk sale of bad assets.

The first involved the sale of P8.6-billion NPL portfolio to Philippine Asset Investment, a unit of Morgan Stanley Emerging Markets Inc. It was the first deal entered by a local universal bank under the SPV framework.

The SPV Law waived some of the taxes and fees usually collected in the sale or transfer of assets, including documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax and e-VAT (expanded value added tax). It, likewise, reduced the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent.

Group...

From page A1

debilitating," he said.

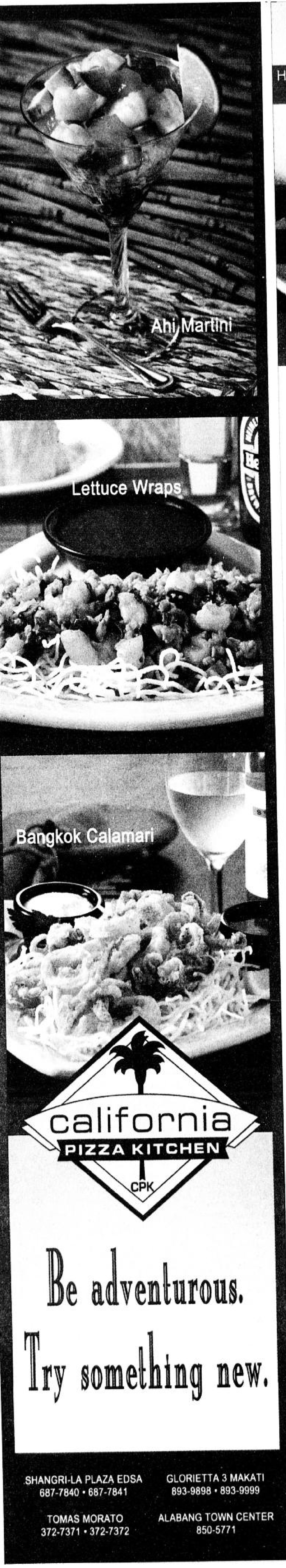
"Over the next few years, the economic challenges will remain the same—fiscal consolidation, improving the investment climate, and improving governance. The need for deeper and sustained reforms remains dominant."

A local research group also warned that with the peso and stocks tumbling to their lowest levels in four years, a financial collapse could spell the end for the Arroyo administration before the year closes.

Presenting its mid-year economic report, Ibon Foundation said the economic losses suffered due to the increasing calls for the President's resignation and protests over rising prices might succeed where the political opposition has failed.

"The fall of the peso is due to political reasons. The longer Ms Arroyo stays in power, the greater the danger for financial collapse," Ibon research director Antonio Tujan said in a press briefing in Quezon City yesterday.

"If the peso slides to 65, even the big businesses and the trade sector supporting her now will feel that it's too much to pay for the President to stay in power," Tujan said. *With reports from Blanche S. Rivera, AFP, AP*



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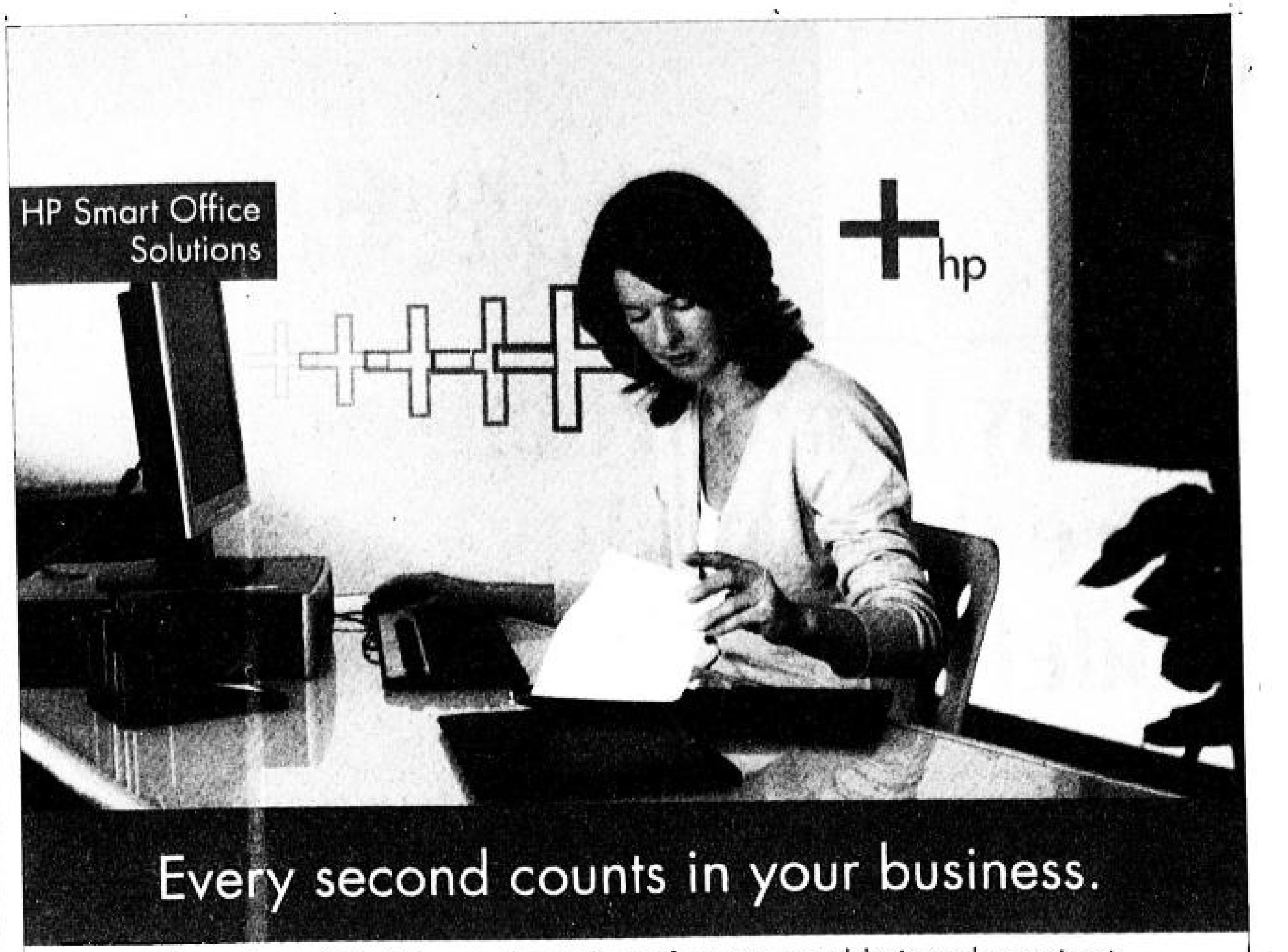

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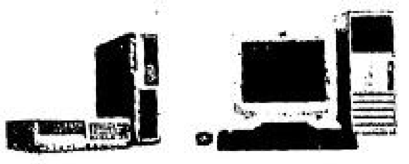

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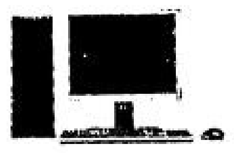

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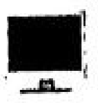

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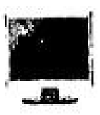

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Editor Aries Espinosa

People, Events & Products

Cathay Land promises more than quality model units

WHEN prospective buyers visit any condominium or subdivision project, a visit to the model unit caps their day. In here, the developer, with the help of top interior designers, usually showcase the best flooring, bathroom, furniture, kitchen, and roofing materials to "wow" the buyer.

However, fast rising real estate developer Cathay Land goes a step further. The company proudly announced that investors and home buyers can expect the same quality materials they appreciated in the model units of South Forbes Golf City to be used in their actual homes, according to its president, Jeffrey Ng.

"As part of the Cathay Group of Companies, which include the leading steel manufacturer Cathay Metal Corp, local tile manufacturer Eurotiles, and the top building materials retailer Federal Hardware, we are able to draw out synergies with our sister companies and thus offer quality materials from here and abroad with the end view of a luxurious enjoyment for our homebuyers," Ng emphasized.

In particular, Cathay Land tapped some of the best housing materials in Federal Design Expo, Federal Hardware's biggest store showcase along Pasong Tamo in Makati City. Ng stressed, "Each item featured in our South Forbes model units was sourced from the world's leading manufacturers and best brands."

For the flooring of its new Villas and Mansions model units, Cathay Land used Hornitex floor panels for the bedrooms and hallways and the latest Eurotiles ceramic tiles for high-traffic areas such as the kitchen and living room. Hornitex is one of Europe's leading manufacturers of wood-based materials and decorative laminate panels. Its revolutionary Top-Lock wood wedges have an interlocking mechanism and thus require glue-free, mess-free installation.

The products of another top European firm, MFI, were showcased in the kitchen. UK-based MFI's strength lies in its modular kitchen cabinetry, including designs from the traditional to the contemporary and classic. As the houses in South Forbes exude the best in modern Mediterranean and Asian designs, contemporary MFI kitchens were thus used in the model units.

Cathay Land wanted to use as well the best bathroom fixtures available in the market. Thus, HCG bathroom fixtures, which feature elegantly sculpted lavatories, tubs, and water closets adorn the model units - allowing residents luxurious, private moments.

To assure homeowners that their homes will last, the model units feature fiber Hardiflex building boards. These are tough, flexible building products unsurpassed in terms of economy, versatility, and ease of use.

As for the roof, only CPAC Monier roofing tiles would do. Unlike other roofing tiles, CPAC's extra metal sheet gives the home added protection from the heat of the sun and hard rainfall. To prove the tiles' durability, its manufacturer, La Farge, grants homeowners a 25-year warranty against cracks and leaks. "Now, that spells peace of mind," Ng asserted.

He summed up Cathay's development strategy: "We are envisioning South Forbes Golf City to be a world-class satellite city featuring only the best lifestyle, dining, entertainment, and recreational choices for the whole family. Thus, we took extra care in selecting only the best world-class home materials not just for the model units, but for their homes."

To fully appreciate how these quality roofing, bath, flooring, and kitchen materials make up the attractive model units of South Forbes Golf City in the booming Sta. Rosa-Tagaytay growth area, please make an appointment at (02) 635-8108 and 636-4647 or visit www.cathaylandinc.com.

corinthian Homes
GROUNDBREAKING
Brgy. Macabling, Sta. Rosa Laguna
JUNE 27, 2005

CORINTHIAN HOMES HOLDS GROUNDBREAKING

Corinthian Homes, a residential project funded by Sunvar Realty Development Corp and Corinthian Commercial Corp, held its groundbreaking ceremony last June 27, at Barangay Macabling, Sta. Rosa, Laguna. Shown at the picture are (from left): lawyer Pat A. Garcia, Manuel R. Chanco III, Dennis O. Valdes, Councilor Petronio C. Factoriza, Peter A.C. Capotosto, Brgy. Captain Oscar G. Ong-iko, Mayor Jose B. Catindig, Barbara B. Go, project proponent Marixi R. Prieto, Vice Mayor Arlene A. Nazareno, Marisun L. Uichico, Maria Paz R. Tanjangco, Macario S. Rufino, Councilor Laudemer A. Carta, Alejandro R. Prieto, Councilor Jose C. Cartaño, and Lydia P. Samonte.

Z-Vita proven to increase height, weight

NOW it can be told. Z-Vita helps increase height and weight of children.

In a local study conducted by pediatrician Dr. Lia Padilla-Medalla of Cardinal Santos Medical Center on a group of malnourished children 3 to 10 years of age in Mandaluyong City, daily zinc supplementation for six months significantly increased the height and weight of the subjects. Using Z-Vita - a zinc gluconate with vitamin B complex and lysine preparation - the zinc-supplemented group grew by 1.7 inches in height and gained one kilogram in weight as compared to the children from the control group.

This study of Dr. Padilla-Medalla bolsters the positive effect of zinc on physical growth as reported in 33 other foreign clinical studies. Based on these investigations, zinc demonstrated a positive effect on height velocity. This meta-analysis was reported by Dr. Kenneth Brown of the International Zinc Investigator's Collaborative Group (IZINC).

In line with this significant outcome of zinc's beneficial effects, the study of Dr Padilla-Medalla was awarded second prize in the Prospective Research Paper category during the recently concluded annual convention of the Philippine Pediatric Society (PPS) held at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC).

Z-Vita was also recently awarded The Most Outstanding Height Enhancement Vitamin given by the Philippine Marketing Excellence Awards Institute, Sales and Marketing Magazine and The Asian Institute of Marketing and Entrepreneurship at the Westin Philippine Plaza. The award was given for Z-Vita's outstanding marketing performance leading towards market dominance, goodwill, high level customer confidence and market acceptability.

The positive effect of zinc as a somatonutrient for physical growth is due to its role in more than 200 enzymatic functions of the body, which include the production of physical and skeletal growth-promoting hormones like testosterone and insulin growth factor (IGF). Other nutrients, like chlorella growth factor, are merely involved in protein synthesis and cell growth; hence not skeletal growth.

Z-Vita contains zinc gluconate, the preferred source of zinc ions as it is more bioavailable compared to other zinc preparations like zinc lactate and zinc sulfate. The lysine in Z-Vita enhances the absorption of zinc in the intestines.

To add to its expanding zinc product line, Pediapharma Inc (PPI) - "a first to innovate" pharmaceutical company - has recently launched Zinbee syrup, a new single ingredient zinc gluconate preparation. Zinbee has a delightful strawberry flavor and is very affordable. Another pioneer product of PPI is Zimuvite drops, a zinc formulation with antioxidant vitamins A, C and E for complete immunity.

BOSE EVENTS TEAM AT ASTROPLUS PODIUM

Watch the Free Bose Music Show at Astroplus Podium every weekend until July 31 and win 1 of 3 units of Bose Companion 2 Multimedia Speakers. Shown in photo (from right) are the events team: Ding Lapira, events manager; Michael Cerbas, Astroplus manager; George San Pedro and Glenn Manglallan.

Product FILES

Charmee's Perfect Mix

WHETHER you are on your way to school, work or out for a gimmick, best that you carry with you Charmee's Perfect Mix for superior comfort and protection everyday. Charmee with it's new line of products gives you superior protection at an everyday cost. Charmee Regular Pantyliners will keep you feeling fresh all day for only P8.50 for a pack of 8 pads. For your monthly period, there's new Charmee for All Types of Flow with Wings that sells for only P2.25 per pad. Made longer than most regular pads and now with Anti Leak Channels, it gives superior protection against those nasty front, side back leaks. To aid faster absorption, Charmee All Flow comes with Super Absorbent Polymer that turns liquid to gel. For the woman on the go, make sure to grab a pack pf Charmee Feminine Wipes with it's soft and gentle tissue texture, hypoallergenic / antibacterial ingredients, ph balance, alcohol free with a mild powder scent that is sure to give you a clean and comfortable feeling wherever you may be. Charmee Feminine Wipes sells for P19.50 for a pack with 10 pulls. If you really want to feel clean, comfortable and great 24/7, these new products is a must for full protection everyday, no matter how active you are. Make sure you have the Charmee Perfect Mix in your bag everyday. Charmee feminine protection products provides the best value offering superior protection comfort all day at an affordable price.

Plasmin celebrates 1st anniversary

IT HAS been a year since the introduction of Plasmin capsules - the only dietary supplement proven to dissolve blood clots. Originating from China, Plasmin has now effectively brought relief of bothersome symptoms leading to better quality of lives for thousands of Filipino families. Plasmin (Lumbrokinase 250mg) contains 3 clot-dissolving enzymes namely collagenase, profibrinolysin activator and fibrinolysin, that work in synergy to dissolve blood clots. As part of the anniversary celebration, patrons of Plasmin are entitled to a special anniversary promo. Please call 894-2932, 894-2667 or 0919-6250944 for details. Plasmin is exclusively marketed by Sea Pharmacom Inc.

Bits Clips

KIA holds service clinic

COLUMBIAN Autocar Corp (CAC), manufacturer and distributor of KIA vehicles in the Philippines, will undertake its annual service clinic for customers' vehicles at its dealerships nationwide from July 4 to 16. Dubbed KIA Service Clinic "Energized", the project involves subjecting customers' vehicles to personalized inspection and thorough diagnosis by KIA-certified technicians and visiting engineers from KIA Motors Corp of Korea. The program this year has been 'energized' through the granting of service discounts on parts and labor, freebies and an expanded promo coverage that includes body parts and paint. Catch the KIA certified technicians and visiting engineers from KIA Motors Corp at this year's selected dealers for the service clinic: KIA Pasay, July 4 to 6; KIA Mandaluyong, July 7 to 9; KIA Batangas, July 11 to 13; and KIA Motors Quezon Avenue, July 14 to 16.

Children's Hour hosts art exhibit, screening

CHILDREN'S Hour, co-sponsored by the Makati Business Club, is hosting a back-to-back event that is expected to generate funds and awareness about the country's disadvantaged children. Popular painter Ernie Sta. Maria will open to the public his art to be followed by the screening of Ditsi Carolino's social film documentary "Bunso." Both activities happen less than an hour apart this coming Monday, July 11 at the Glorietta 4 in Makati City. Dubbed as "A Second Look for a Cause", the launch of the art exhibit will be from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. to be held at the Art Space, Level 3 in Glorietta 4 and will run until July 22. Guests are also invited to view Carolino's highly acclaimed social documentary "Bunso" about Children In Conflict with Law (CICL). Screening time is 8 p.m. at Cinema 6, Level 4 of Glorietta 4. For inquiries, call the secretariat at telefax (63)(2) 894-1663; website - www.childrenshour.org.ph; E-mail - ask@childrenshour.org.ph.

Estudyante Treats from Ministop

MINISTOP, the fastest growing combo store in the metro, gives you yet another reason to enjoy this new school year. Students of all ages can get fun giveaways just by purchasing any of the participating brands in the Ministop Estudyante Treats promo that will run until July 13. There are five ways to enjoy this exciting and easy treat. One: buy two pieces of the same kind of the following items and get a free pencil set - M & M's chocolates, Chippy snacks, Spuds Potato chips and Sprite in can (330ml). Two: get a free Refresh Juice with every Cherryhill Hok-hok Hopia, Quake Layers or Rolls, or Gandour chocolates (Safari, Tofiluk or Pik-One). Three: get a free Sundae cone if you buy 2 pieces Lotte Bubble Gum. Four: buy one piece Quickie Cup for a free Zesto Green Tea. And lastly: you can get a free notebook by just purchasing two pieces of Blueskies Snackpack. School time will definitely be a blast with these fabulous new treats from Ministop.

Hands of Heaven celebrates 2nd year

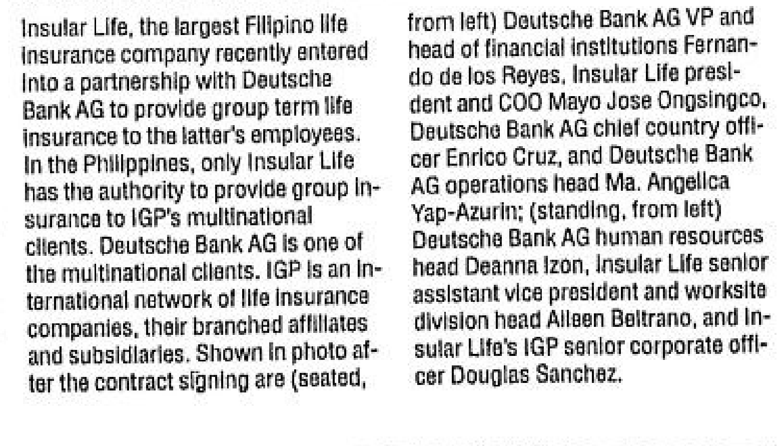
HANDS of Heaven, a memorial park in Bayambang, Pangasinan operated by Palm Core Realty Dev't Corp, recently celebrated its 2nd anniversary with simple ceremonies led by lawyer Fernando Cojuangco and engineer Abelardo Palad, chair and president respectively of Palm Core Realty. During the celebrations, Palm Core distributed gift packages to indigent residents of the barangays in the area. The eleven-hectare memorial park is located along the national highway at the Poblacion District of Bayambang. Now considered a landmark of the town, the park is an environment-friendly leisure spot where a man-made lagoon provides a fresh and cool center for contemplation for the bereaved. It also has an elegant administration building and a bas relief at the entrance, inspired by Michaelangelo's painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican in Rome. Soon to be constructed within the park is the chapel with a columbarium surrounding it.

Manila Dental Society's 69'th annual confab

THE MANILA Dental Society recently held its 69th annual convention last July 3 to 4 at the Manila Pavilion Hotel, UN Ave., Manila. Distinguished speakers lectured on: "Protaper - a simple way to qualify root canal preparation" by Dr. Alice Chan; "Traumatic Injuries to Primary Teeth" by Dr. Georgina Remulla; "Comprehensive Approach to Management of Impacted 3rd Molar to General Practitioners" by Dr. Ma. Cristina Estrada; "Predictable Esthetics and Functional Reconstruction of a Smile" by Dr. Antonio Concepcion; and "Nano Hybrid Composite" by Dr. Joseph Postigo. This year's theme is "Basic Industry, amidst the technological breakthrough.

CF SHARP NAMES INSURER, CONSULTANT

CF Sharp and Company Pte Ltd (CF Sharp), a leader in the fields of crewing, travel, freight forwarding, brokerage, air cargo, land based recruiting and training, appoints AsianLife and General Assurance Corp (AsianLife & General) as its insurer in providing medical insurance benefits for its seafarers and their dependents and Omni International Consultants Inc (Omni) as its insurance consultant. Shown in photo are (front, from left) AsianLife and General EVP Bobby Alfonso and president and CEO Eulogio Mendoza, CF Sharp vice president Miguel Rocha, and Omni managing director John Young; (back, from left) AsianLife and General AVP Rogelio Sotelo and assistant manager Cecilio Marcos Sarenas, CF Sharp crewing administration and business development manager Aurita Milanco, Omni claims manager Dang Escudero, and employee benefits manager Juja Barbin.


THE INSULAR LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY, LTD.
and
Deutsche Bank and Subsidiaries
CONTRACT SIGNING

INSULAR LIFE, DEUTSCHE BANK AG INK CONTRACT

Insular Life, the largest Filipino life insurance company recently entered into a partnership with Deutsche Bank AG to provide group term life insurance to the latter's employees. In the Philippines, only Insular Life has the authority to provide group insurance to IGP's multinational clients. Deutsche Bank AG is one of the multinational clients. IGP is an international network of life insurance companies, their branched affiliates and subsidiaries. Shown in photo after the contract signing are (seated, from left) Deutsche Bank AG VP and head of financial institutions Fernando de los Reyes, Insular Life president and COO Mayo Jose Ongsingco, Deutsche Bank AG chief country officer Enrico Cruz, and Deutsche Bank AG operations head Ma. Angelica Yap-Azurin; (standing, from left) Deutsche Bank AG human resources head Deanna Izon, Insular Life senior assistant vice president and worksite division head Aileen Beltrano, and Insular Life's IGP senior corporate officer Douglas Sanchez.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BID AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
(for PICC Projects)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP) invites Consultants to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for the **Construction Management Consultancy Services** for the proposed PICC Project Package 2a which will cover the Rehabilitation of the Fire and Water Damaged Areas of the Delegation Building of the Philippine International Convention Center. The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for this consultancy services is **P3.8 Million.**

The scope of Construction Management work includes among others quantity surveying services, preparation of detailed estimates, value engineering, full construction management and supervision for the proposed PICC Project Package 2a as specified in the Terms of Reference.

The minimum eligibility requirements are as follows:

1.0 The firm must have been in operation for the last fifteen (15) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this invitation) engaging in the lawful practice of the type of consulting services called for in this invitation.

2.0 The firm must have rendered within the last ten (10) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this invitation) Construction Management consultancy services for at least five (5) completed new construction or rehabilitation projects of similar or greater nature/magnitude/complexity as the proposed BSP project and must be able to submit a certification of satisfactory performance from the client for at least three (3) of the required five (5) projects.

3.0 The Principal or Managing Officer must be a Registered Architect or Engineer with at least fifteen (15) years experience in actual construction work and construction management.

4.0 The Project Manager for the projects must be a registered Architect or Civil Engineer with minimum fifteen (15) years experience in actual construction work five (5) years of which is in construction management.

5.0 The Construction Management Senior Staff should at least be Registered Architects/Engineers with a minimum ten (10) years combined design/construction management and construction experience where the Construction Management experience should at least be five (5) years. The minimum number required for the Senior Staff should at least be three (3) excluding the principal and project manager.

6.0 The firm (partnership/corporation/joint venture) must be at least 60% owned by a Filipino citizen.

7.0 In case of a joint venture, a valid joint venture agreement shall be required. The joint venture must have rendered construction management consultancy services for at least two (2) completed projects of similar magnitude as the proposed BSP project.

8.0 For those firms with previous or current Construction Management Consultancy Services with the BSP, a certificate of satisfactory performance issued by the Bank must be submitted.

The quality-cost based evaluation procedure stipulated in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA No. 9184 shall be adopted for this consultancy service requirement.

Eligibility documents may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat on 01 to 08 July 2005 for a non-refundable fee of P200.00; Room 204, 2nd Floor, Five Storey Building at the BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Streets, Manila and must be submitted duly accomplished to the same office not later than 4:30 p.m. on **15 July 2005.**

The provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations relative to the bidding and award of contract shall apply.

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive defect or any formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any consultant/s whose bid/s is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP. Furthermore, BSP is not obliged to compensate/indemnify the consultant for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.**
Chairman

(PDI – June 30 & July 7, 2005)

Provincial Government of Bukidnon

759-05-002-A
Drugs & Medicines
760-05-002-A
Medical, Lab Supplies & Reagents
PGSO Capitol Compd., Malaybalay City

Standard Form Number : SF-GOOD-05
Revised on July 28, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO RE-BID

The **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF BUKIDNON** through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder projects

NAME OF THE PROJECT	I. Drugs and Medicines II. Medical Laboratory Supplies & Reagents
LOCATION	Provincial General Services Office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City
BRIEF DESCRIPTION	For six months consumption of seven (7) Provincial Hospitals and Twenty-two (22) Provincial Health Stations.
Approved Budget for the contract	Project I – P6,530,117.61 Project II – P1,016,515.24
DELIVERY PERIOD	15 working days upon receipt of purchase order
PLACE OF DELIVERY	Provincial General Services Office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

Eligible Suppliers need not to submit their eligibility requirements. The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 5-10, 2005
2. Application for Eligibility	July 15, 2005 Not later than 9:00 A.M.
3. Pre-bid Conference	July 4, 2005
4. Opening of Bids	July 19, 2005 not later than 9:00 AM
5. Bid Evaluation	July 26, 2005
6. Post-qualification	August 2, 2005
7. Notice of Award	August 9, 2005

Bid Documents will be available only to eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P500.00/Project to the Provincial Treasurer.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the BAC office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security equal to 1% for Cash, Certified check, Cashier's check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable letter of credit; 1.5% for Bank guarantee, 2.5% for Surety bond of the Approved Budget for the Contract as advertised. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

The Province of Bukidnon reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Tel. # – 088-221-2537
Fax # – 088-813-2522

Approved by

(Sgd.) JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES
Prov'l. Admin/BAC Chairman

(PDI–June 30 & July 7, 2005)

Republika ng Pilipinas
Republic of the Philippines
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City

Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim
Office of the Undersecretary

Telefax: 631-96-40
Direct Line: 633-93-42
Trunk Line: 632-13-61 locals 2221 / 2007
E-Mail Address: jmluz@deped.gov.ph
Website: http://www.deped.gov.ph

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
(RE-BID)

Supply and Delivery of Instructional/Orientation Video on the School - Based Management Module of TEEP (Production and Post-Production)

1. The Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) of the Department of Education (DepED) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), intends to apply the sum of **Eight Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (PhP850,000.00)** only being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Supply and Delivery of Instructional/Orientation Video on the School-Based Management Module of TEEP (Production and Post-Production)**, hereinafter called the "GOODS". Bids received in excess of the ABC will be rejected at bid opening.

2. The DepED now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Supply and Delivery of "GOODS" to the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP), Department of Education, DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II, Instructions to Bidders, of the Bidding Documents.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184 known as The Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interests or outstanding capital stocks belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II, Instruction to Bidders of the Bidding Documents.

4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting **July 6, 2005 until July 15, 2005** at the BAC Secretariat, Room 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos only (PhP500.00). Information is also available at http://www.deped.gov.ph or www.procurementservice.org. The BAC Secretariat could be reached through Tel. No. 636-6543 or Fax No. 636-6542.

5. Bids must be received on or before **July 20, 2005, 10:00 a.m.** at the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, DepED Complex, Pasig City. Late Bids shall be rejected. Bid opening shall be conducted on the same date, venue, and time.

6. The DepED, BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) **JUAN MIGUEL M. LUZ**
Undersecretary and BAC Chairman

(PDI - July 7, 2005)

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that at a Special Meeting held on April 30, 2005 in Seoul, Republic of Korea, the Board of Directors of **CHUSIK HOESA NATURALIFE (NATURALIFE CO., LTD. in English)** has unanimously approved the withdrawal of its license and the dissolution/closure of its Representative Office in the Philippines effective as of May 30, 2005.

All persons having claims against the said Philippine Representative Office are requested to present the same at the Office of its authorized representative agent, Atty. Antonino P. San Juan, Jr., with office address at 3/F Saville Building, 8728 Paseo de Roxas Avenue corner Jupiter Street, Makati City.

This announcement shall serve as notice of the withdrawal/dissolution of the aforesaid representative office.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ANTONINO P. SAN JUAN, JR.**
Representative Agent

(PDI–June 23, 30 & July 7, 2005)

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Direct Line: 633-93-42
Trunk Line: 632-13-61 locals 2221 / 2007
E-Mail Address: jmluz@deped.gov.ph
Website: http://www.deped.gov.ph

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
(RE-BID)

1. The Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) of the Department of Education (DepED) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites consultants to submit letter of intent (LOI), apply for eligibility and short listing and if found eligible and short listed, to bid for the hereunder project.

Name of Project	: **Processing of 2005 National School-Based Assessment (NSBA) Survey Questionnaires**
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	: **PhP928,800.00**
Source of Funding	: **TEEP-GOP**
Contract duration (indicative)	: **September 1, 2005 to October 31, 2005**

Bids that exceed the ABC shall be rejected.

2. The list of minimum requirements is indicated in the Checklist of Eligibility Requirements. Eligibility of prospective bidders shall be checked using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Short listing of eligible consultants will be done based on the following criteria: experience of the consultant, qualification of personnel and current workload relative to adequacy of equipment and facilities, staff and working funds. Only seven (7) eligible bidders shall make up the short list. The evaluation procedure to be adopted shall be Quality Cost based Evaluation (QCBE). Bids whose technical proposals pass the minimum technical rating shall have its financial proposals opened and evaluated.

3. All particulars relative to eligibility check, bid security, performance security, pre-bid conference, evaluation of bids, post-qualification and award of contracts shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

4. The schedule of activities as follows:

Activities	Schedule
Submission of Letter of Intent and Application for Eligibility	July 6 - 26, 2005
Issuance of checklist of Eligibility Requirements	July 6 - 26, 2005
Deadline for Submission of Eligibility Requirements	July 27, 2005
Results of Eligibility Check and Short listing	August 1, 2005
Issuance of Bid Documents	August 2 - 8, 2005
Pre-bid Conference	August 9, 2005, 10:00 a.m.
Bid Opening	August 23, 2005, 10:00 a.m.

5. The Checklist of Eligibility Requirements shall be available at BAC Secretariat, Procurement Service, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City upon submission of a Letter of Intent and Application for Eligibility. Submission of eligibility requirements shall be made to the same office. Information is also available at http://www.deped.gov.ph or www.procurementservice.org. The BAC Secretariat could be reached through Tel. No. 636-6543 or Fax No. 636-6542.

6. Bid documents will be available only to short listed consultants upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Philippine Pesos One Thousand and 00/100 only (PhP1,000.00). Venue of the pre-bid conference and bid opening will be at the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.

7. The Purchaser assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the Bid. Likewise, the Purchaser reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) **JUAN MIGUEL M. LUZ**
Undersecretary and BAC Chairman

(PDI - July 7, 2005)

Republika ng Pilipinas
Republic of the Philippines
Kagawaran ng Tanggulang Pambansa
Department of National Defense

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Department of National Defense (Armed Forces of the Philippines) through the General Appropriations Act and AFP Modernization Program Act Trust Fund, intends to apply the sum of ***FOUR HUNDRED ELEVEN MILLION, THREE HUNDRED TWO THOUSAND AND FOUR HUNDRED PESOS*** **(PHP411,302,400.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Supply and Delivery of the Night Fighting System for the Philippine Army. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2. The DND/AFP now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the NIGHT FIGHTING SYSTEM consisting of:

LOT	PARTICULARS	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	ABC
1	Night Vision Monocular	1,440	Php 350,665,460.00
2	Infrared Aiming Device	1,440	55,036,800.00
	Laser Zeroing Device	181	5,600,140.00
		TOTAL	Php 411,302,400.00

3. The expected delivery of GOODS or contract duration is 180 CALENDAR DAYS as per Bidding Documents. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents.

4. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Bidding Documents. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine his responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

5. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the DND Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address specified below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of ***THIRTY THOUSAND PESOS*** **(Php 30,000.00)** for **LOT 1** and ***TEN THOUSAND PESOS*** **(Php 10,000.00)** for **LOT 2.** The method of payment will be in cash or thru cashier's check. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

6. The DND-AFP will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on July 14, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. at the *Silid Panday Pira, 1st Floor Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.*

7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted to the address below on or before 10:00 a.m., August 11, 2005. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the forms and corresponding amount allowed under RA 9184 and its IRR-A. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

8. Bid opening shall be at 10:00 a.m. on August 11, 2005. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at *Silid Panday Pira, 1st Flr, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.*

9. Only bids from manufacturers and/or exclusive distributors of the aforementioned system/equipment will be entertained.

10. To facilitate eligibility checking, manufacturers and/or prospective bidders who wish to participate in the public bidding are required to apply for registration with the DND BAC, through the DND BAC Secretariat, at least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled submission and opening of bids for the procurement of the projects they wish to participate in, pursuant to DND BAC Cir 01-2005 dtd 12 May 2005.

11. The DND / AFP reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process, and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

DND BAC Secretariat
Armed Forces of the Philippines
Modernization Program Management Office
3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo
Quezon City Philippines 1110
Tel No: (632) 911-6001 local 6481
Telefax No: (632) 912-9541 / 421-2327
E-mail: pid@info.com.ph
Website: www.info.com.ph/-afpmod

(Sgd.) **UNDERSECRETARY JOSE F SANTOS**
Chairman, DND BAC

(PDI - June 30 & July 7, 2005)

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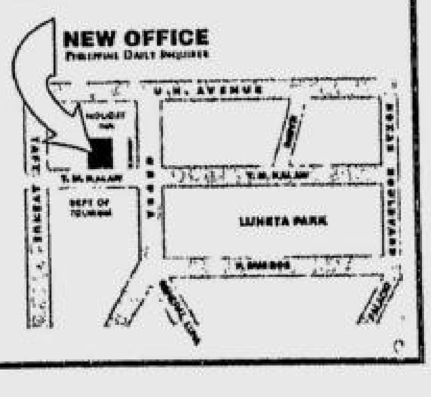

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720 EDSA QC 4397859

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1157 Quezon Ave. 410-1259

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123B Kamuning rd QC 4102182

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11A Kamias QC 4350978

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby gieven that the estate of the late MELQUIADES C. GUTIERREZ has been extra-judicially settled by the heirs per Doc. No. 256, Page No. 51, Book No. I, Series of 2005, before Atty. Ma. Cecilia P. Subido, Notary Public, Makati City.
(PDI-June 23, 30 & July 7, 2005)

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on **July 21, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER (FDC) Auditorium, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila, to all interested rice suppliers for the supply of maximum 185,000 MT, Long grain white rice, non-iron fortified, 15% and 25% brokens, fifty (50) kilograms net each in polypropylene bags suitable for rice export with NFA markings to be loaded in bulk carrier/s with an appropriated budget from corporate resources of Php3.32 B. Source countries shall be Thailand, Vietnam, China, Pakistan, Australia and/or U.S.A. A maximum of 50,000 MT each shall be awarded in case of Pakistan, Australia and/or U.S.A. origin.

All interested suppliers are required to submit quotations for all specifications on CFR FO basis, Documents Against Acceptance (D/A) with a tenor of ninety (90) days from receipt by NFA of the complete set of original documents for payment and on the basis of mandatory countertrade and countertrade performed on best effort. Otherwise, bids shall be considered non-responsive.

Arrival Period shall be as follows:

August 31, 2005	-	At least 50%
September 30, 2005	-	Balance

Government suppliers and private suppliers who have delivered to the NFA within the last two (2) years (2003/2004) and do not have a bad track record may be awarded the following maximum volume:

SUPPLIER	VOLUME (MT)
Government (with good track record)	150,000
Private (with good track record)	50,000
Government/private (without track record)	15,000

However, suppliers and/or source companies with pending import-related accounts/liability prior 2003 are considered to have bad track records and are not allowed to participate in the bid.

Minimum volume to be offered per supplier shall be 10,000 MT per specification. Vessels to be utilized should have a maximum load capacity of 15,000 MT.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 3% of the highest value of offered quantity in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable stand-by Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to post a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded quantity within three (3) banking days after receipt of the notice of award in the form cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

List of Eligibility Requirements and instructions to bidders maybe secured starting July 1, 2005 thru MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Chief III, Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor, NFA, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City with telephone numbers 712-1564; 742-4140; 743-8696; 711-7433; 740-1977; 712-1708; and 712-1572.

The terms of reference and offer sheets will be available from **July 1 to July 15, 2005** (8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P7,500.00.

The pre-bidding conference will be held on **July 8, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Submission of bids will be on **July 21, 2005 between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m.** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila. Opening of bids will start exactly at **10:00 a.m.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **JESSUP P. NAVARRO**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - June 30 & July 7, 2005)

PMAP seminar/workshop slate

THE PERSONNEL Management Association of the Philippines is sponsoring a seminar on Coaching and Counseling which will be held on July 12-13. Registration fee is P4,700 for PMAP Members and P6,200 for Non PMAP Members. As a result of attending this workshop, the participants will be able to explain and apply the framework for analyzing subordinates current behavior; implement basic communication skills that directly contribute to and support motivation; and practice critical guidelines for theoretical and on-the-job coaching and counseling.

A three-day workshop on Competency Design and Development Workshop will be held on July 13-15. Registration fee is P7,700 for PMAP Members and P9,200 for Non PMAP Members. It is a Foundational module designed to prepare the Learners to draft their own specific competency framework plan that will eventually be the starting point of a customised competency framework in their organisations. Workshop approach will be used extensively with lecturettes to clarify certain points making use of the vast learning experiences of the Learners in the process.

The program entitled Job Analysis, Evaluation and Classification scheduled on July 18-19. The program focuses on the basic concepts and principles of job analysis, evaluation and classification, and how to conduct similar exercises on their respective organizations. The module is designed to give participants a good knowledge foundation about such systems. Registration fee is P5,600 for PMAP Members and P7,100 for Non PMAP Members.

All programs will be held at PMAP Center in Mandaluyong City. For reservations, please contact The Human Resource Management Development Center at telephone numbers 726-1581; 726-1588 or 726-1532; email address: mira.jakosalem@pmap.org.ph or you may visit the website: www.pmap.org.ph

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ESTRELLA "BOOTS" EUGENIO

Peacefully joined her Creator on July 6, 2005 at the age of 71.

Her loving husband **Salvador (Buddy)**; children **Sammy & Tess, Ronnie & Doy, Ronald & Jo, Bernard**; grandchildren and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 9, 2005 at the Holycross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City, after the 9 a.m. Mass at Arlington.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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CORAZON A. SERASPI

Retiree of United Laboratories, Inc.

Died in the Grace of our Lord on July 5, 2005 at the age of 73.

Her body lies in state at Nacional Memorial Homes, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at Heavens Gate, Antipolo City. Date to be announced later.

HERBERT N. EATON

Passed away on July 4, 2005 at the age of 83.

His remains now lie in state at La Funeraria Paz-Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on July 9, 2005, Saturday at the Manila Memorial Park – Sucat at 1:00 P.M.

SEVERINA C. MIRANDA

Retiree of United Laboratories, Inc.

Died in the Grace of our Lord on July 5, 2005 at the age of 71.

Her body lies in state at Arlington, Araneta Ave., Q.C. Interment will be at Himlayang Pilipino, Quezon City. Date to be announced later.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28

In Loving Memory
on the
9th Death Anniversary
of

ROMEO DAVID PASCUAL

Died on July 07, 1996

Schedule of Masses

Immaculate Concepcion Parish Church Balibago, Angeles City	7:00 AM
Holy Rosary Parish Church Sto. Rosario, Angeles City	8:30 AM
Sacred Heart Chapel Sto. Domingo, Angeles City	6:15 AM
Carmelite Monastery Sto. Domingo, Angeles City	6:00 AM
Don Bosco Chapel Tarlac City	6:30 AM
San Sebastian Cathedral Tarlac City	7:00 AM
Shrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Dao St., Makati City	6:00 PM
Sanctuario de San Jose Parish Greenhills, San Juan	6:15 PM

"For My yoke is easy and my burden is light."
Matthew 11:30

TEODORA "DORIE" MANGUERRA DELFINO

of Sta. Rosa, Laguna

Peacefully joined our Creator on July 3, 2005 at the age of 56.

A loving wife to her husband Greg. A doting and caring mother to her children **Yum-yum Speedy, Tin-tin and Bambi.**

Her remains lie in state at the Sta. Rosa De Lima Parish Mortuary, Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 9, 2005 at the Sta. Rosa Memorial Garden, Brgy. Burol, Sta. Rosa, Laguna, after the 8 o'clock morning Mass at the Sta. Rosa De Lima Parish Church.

Our Beloved Mama

JOSEFINA CARANDANG vda. de ENCOMIENDA

Joined her Creator and our dear Papa, JOSE on July 3, 2005 at the age of 79.

We, her children, CHARITO and RENE SEÑERES, and EDWIN and SYLVIA VILLAR; sister LETTY CARANDANG; grandchildren Corinne April and Timothy Jan, Paolo Enrico and Karla Patricia, request for prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel Ipil, Funeraria Paz, Sucat, Parañaque, Metro Manila. Funeral Mass will be held on Friday, July 8, 2005 at 8:00 p.m.

Interment will be at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 9:00 a.m. Mass on Saturday, July 9, 2005.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

ITS No.	Item/Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-184	2,915 bxs. Continuous Form 11" x 14 7/8, 1 ply	P 2,324,712.50	LBP Funds

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on **July 27, 2005 at 1:00 p.m.** and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00.**

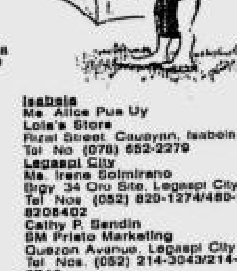
Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **July 14, 2005** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to **Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).**

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose bid is most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI – June 30 & July 7, 2005)



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BUSINESS

FAILURE TO SELL SHARES

EPCIBank subsidiary facing sanctions

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has threatened administrative sanctions against EBC Investments Inc. (EBCII), a subsidiary of Equitable PCI Bank, for failing to sell a 10.8-percent stake in the parent bank within two years after the shares were acquired in 1999.

Monetary Board resolution 842 dated June 23, which EPCIBank has appealed for reconsideration, also gave EBCII 30 days from receipt of the letter advice to submit a specific action plan to "address the resulting capital impairment" from its continued holding on to the shares.

"EBCII shall explain why it should not be subjected to administrative sanctions for failure to comply with the directive under Resolution No. 667," the Monetary Board document said, citing EBCII's violation of an earlier resolution dated May 24, 1999, that the 78.8 million shares be sold within two years from acquisition.

However, EPCIBank chief finance officer Ricardo Martin said: "Given the consistent and significant improvement in EPCIBank's performance, which has likewise been reflected in the price of its shares, it would not be prudent, nor a good business decision to sell the EPCIBank shares at this particular time."

The Monetary Board has also asked the bank subsidiary to submit within 30 days a capital-increase plan to offset losses from the equity investment.

EBCII acquired the controversial shares when the Go family's Equitable Bank merged with PCIBank in 1999.

The Monetary Board also directed EBCII to book valuation reserves to reflect the current value of those shares in the meantime that it is not able to dispose of such shares in line with SFAS (Statements of Financial Accounting Standards) 10.

At the same time, EPCIBank was asked to explain why dividends were paid to its subsidiary in May 2005 in view of the provisions of SFAS No. 21, which considered shares of the parent held by a subsidiary as "treasury shares."

Under the Corporation Code, treasury shares refer to shares of stocks which have been issued and fully paid for but subsequently reacquired by the issuing corporation by purchase, redemption or through some other lawful means.

The BSP, for its part, observes its own definition of treasury shares for the purpose of determining capital adequacy requirements for credit risks.

Martin said that with regards to the valuation reserves, EBCII had advised the BSP that the SFAS-10 requirement to write down the value of an investment would apply only if there was a "permanent decline" in the value of these securities.

"SFAS 10 provides certain criteria, such as a series of operating losses or other factors, as a means to determine whether the decline in the value of the security is indeed permanent," Martin said.

"In its response, EBCII again referred to the consistent and significant increase in EPCIBank profitability, which was accompanied by an equally dramatic rise in its traded share price as quite the opposite of the situation contemplated by SFAS 10, clearly establishing that provisioning for the EPCIBank shares held by EBCII is unnecessary," he explained.

Martin also said the parent bank maintained a capital adequacy ratio that was well above the regulatory requirement, even after deducting its investments in subsidiaries as well as undistributed profits.

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Makati Med employees may go on strike

By Clarissa S. Batino

EMPLOYEES of Makati Medical Center are planning to go on strike this week to protest the firing of 295 hospital workers last month.

The retrenchment, according to hospital management, forms part of the measures to address the hospital's financial woes.

Makati Med president Gabino Mendoza said the union had notified the management of the planned strike to be staged either today or Friday.

The management was scheduled to hold last-minute negotiations with the workers yesterday afternoon.

"We hope they would reconsider because this is a hospital and there is an element of public service here," said Mendoza in an interview.

Sources said the union was not convinced that Makati Med was having financial problems. The union believes the hospital is just using this issue as an excuse to retrench some workers.

The 60-year-old hospital fired 295 employees last month, trimming its workforce to 1,600. Of those retrenched, 153 are union members.

"The union is accusing the management of union busting. One of its demands is the reinstatement of the workers," Mendoza said. However, most of the 295 employees have availed themselves of the retirement benefits offered.

The hospital earmarked P150 million for the affected employees' retirement package.

Some quarters blamed Makati Med founder Raul Fores for the hospital's problems for it was allegedly under his watch when the hospital "deteriorated and suffered losses." The hospital incurred P300 million in losses from 2002 to 2004.

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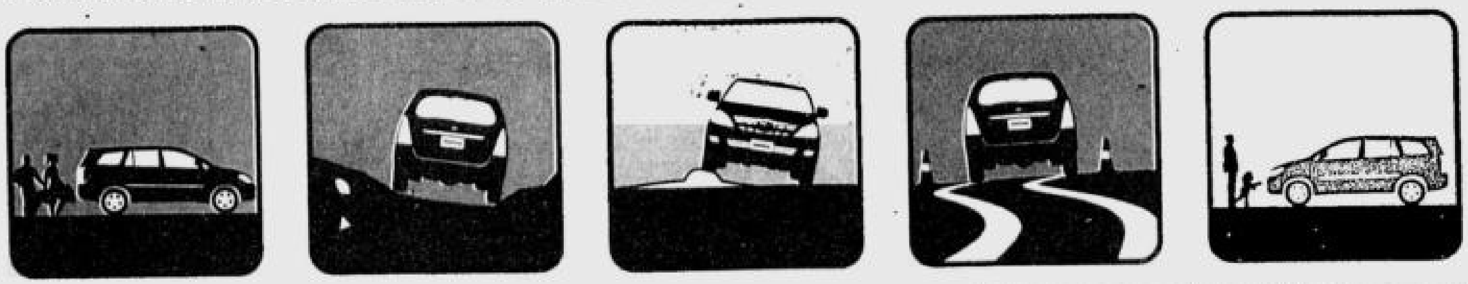

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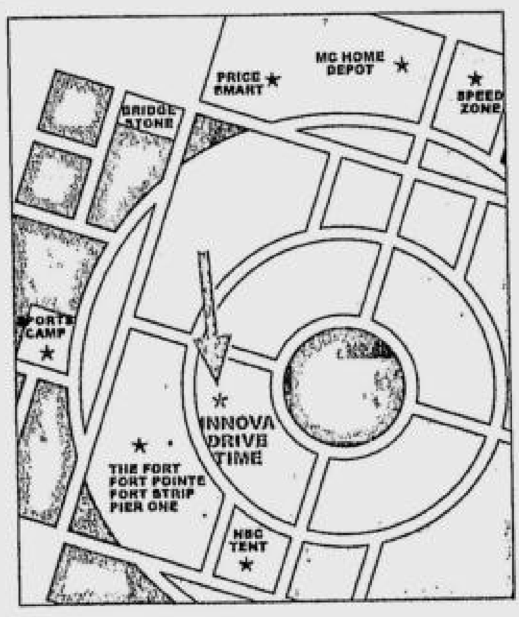

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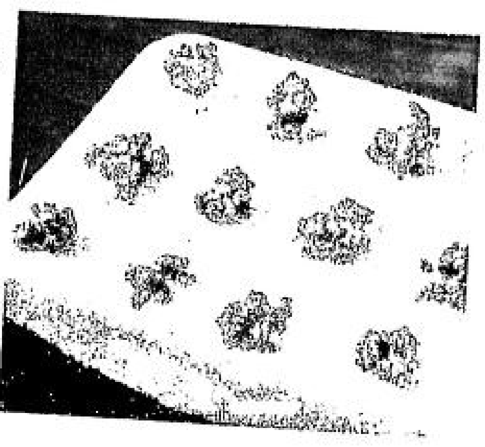
Do you have a winner in the family?



THE LATE Doreen Fernandez, in her weekly food column "In Good Taste" which appeared in this section, often enjoined readers to safeguard their recipes and collect them into cookbooks. "Yours, from your own experience, or your mother's, grandmother's, aunts', in effect a family culinary history... We can use them all," she pleaded.

To continue doing our part in preserving and promoting Filipino cuisine, we launch in this issue the **PDI Family Recipe Contest.** Three recipes will be chosen every week—after being kitchen tested at the **San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center**—to win prizes from **SM Supermarket, Imarflex** and **Reggie Aspiras School of Culinary Arts.** The recipes will be published in a book to commemorate INQUIRER's 20th anniversary in December because, as Doreen put it, "in food research, cookbooks are among the richest sources-not only of recipes, and thus of social practices, but also of history."

Contest rules

1. In 250 words or fewer, tell us about a Filipino dish that has been cooked and served in your family through the years. It should be a dish that mostly features locally grown and locally produced ingredients and highlights traditional/local cooking techniques. Also, tell us (1) who in your family first cooked and served the recipe; (2) how many generations have cooked it; (3) when it is usually cooked and served; and (4) why it is special to the family.

2. Submit a photo of this family dish and a step-by-step written recipe. Include your name, address, daytime telephone number and e-mail address, if any. Photos will not be returned.

3. The recipe must not have been previously published or entered in any other contest. The accompanying essay must be your own original work, and the subject matter must be true.

4. Readers may submit more than one entry but can only win once. Entries will not be acknowledged or returned. INQUIRER is not responsible for late or misdirected entries.

5. Entries should be mailed or hand-delivered to **PDI Family Recipe Contest, c/o Lifestyle,** Philippine Daily Inquirer, 1098 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City 1263, or e-mailed to **recipes@inquirer.com.ph.** Photo attachment to e-mailed entries must be in jpeg format.

6. Three weekly winners will be picked every Monday and the recipes published on the Thursday of the following week.

7. The top weekly winner will receive P2,000 worth of SM gift cheques that will be honored at any SM Supermarket. Two runners-up will get a gift from Imarflex or a class of choice at the Reggie Aspiras School of Culinary Arts. No substitutions or transfers of prizes by the winners will be allowed. Sponsors may substitute a prize of equal or greater value.

8. Submission of an entry grants INQUIRER the exclusive right (but not the obligation) to publish, edit and/or copy the entry for any and all purposes in any media without further compensation to the entrant.

9. This contest is open to INQUIRER readers 18 years of age and older, except INQUIRER employees and members of their immediate families.

10. Judging will be done by the Lifestyle food section staff, whose decisions are final.

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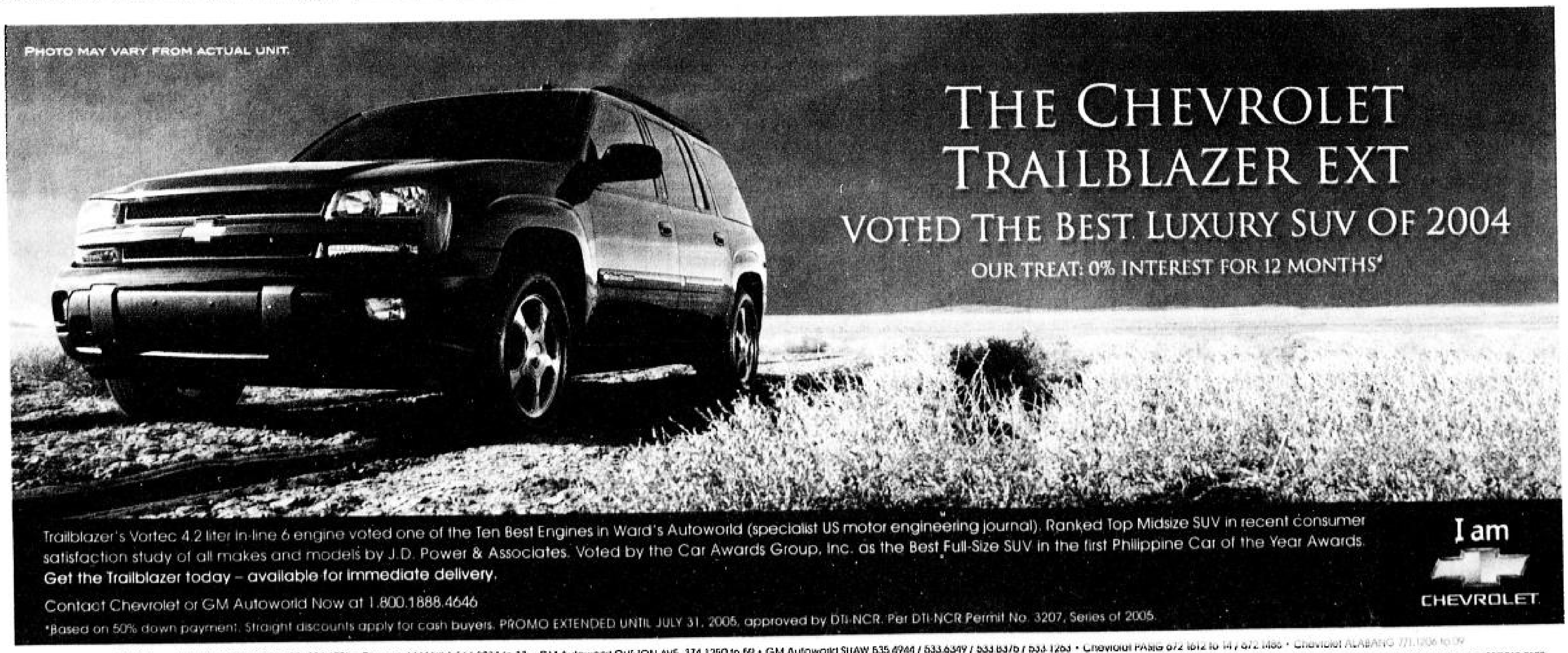

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CLEAN eel thoroughly and cut it in half.

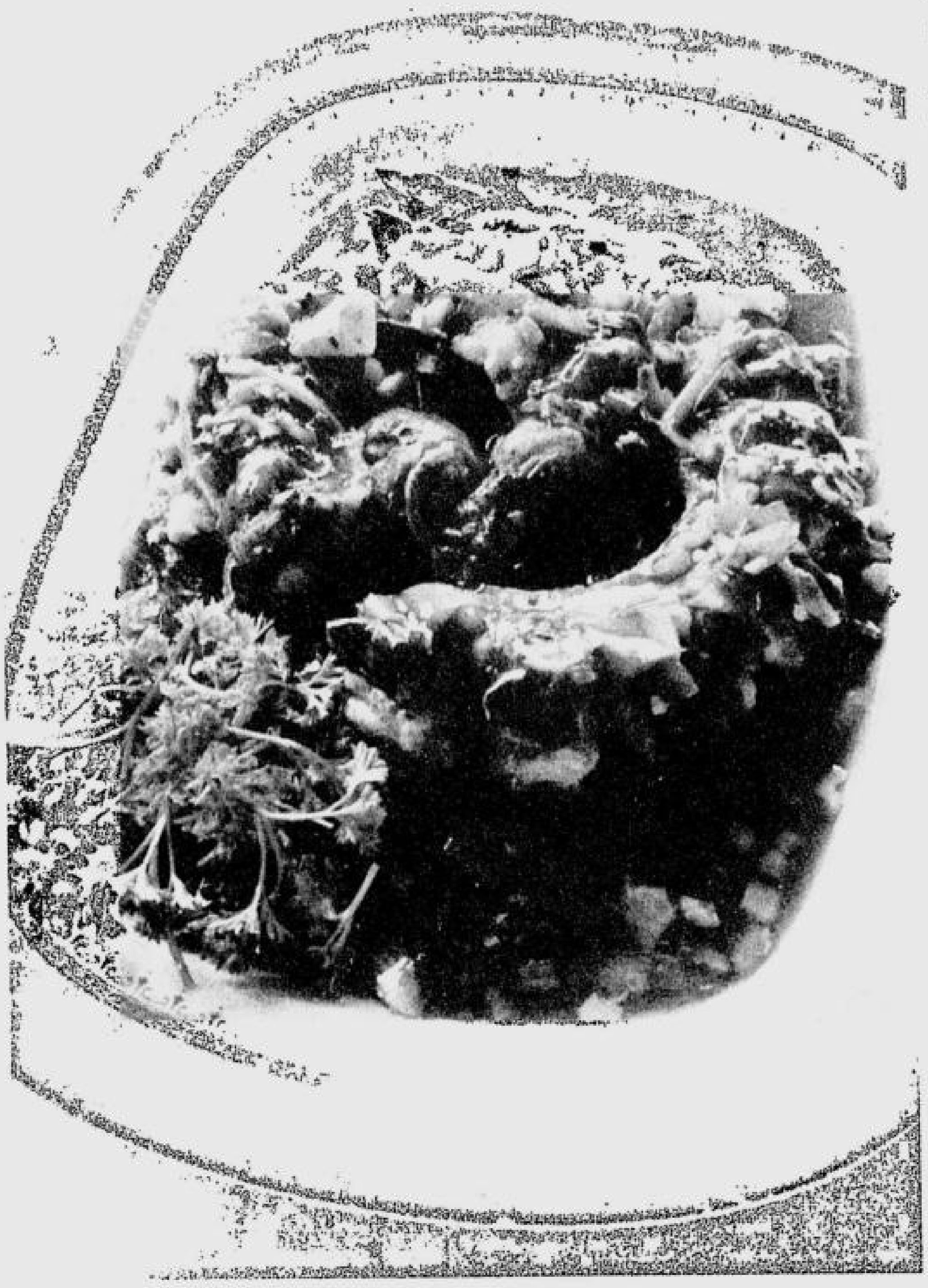
SLICE each half into several short pieces, leaving the skin on. Set aside.

MIX together garlic, green and red bell pepper, onion and sugar.

ADD salt, chili powder, white pepper, Chinese wine and oyster sauce.

ADD soy sauce, sesame oil, *tausi*, cornstarch and corn oil. Mix well.

Something different for change of season



SAVORY Steamed Eel with Tausi

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Joseph Agcaoili

AS the season changes, shouldn't your menu, too?

If you're looking for something new for your dinner or lunch table this rainy season, why not try eel?

Not only does eel have a delicious flavor that can make any meal distinctive, it is a healthy choice as well. The eel is a good source of protein and is also rich in Vitamins A and D.

It is also quite versatile, combining well with lots of different ingredients and suitable for different styles of cooking—baked, stewed, grilled or even steamed with lots of spices.

STEP BY STEP

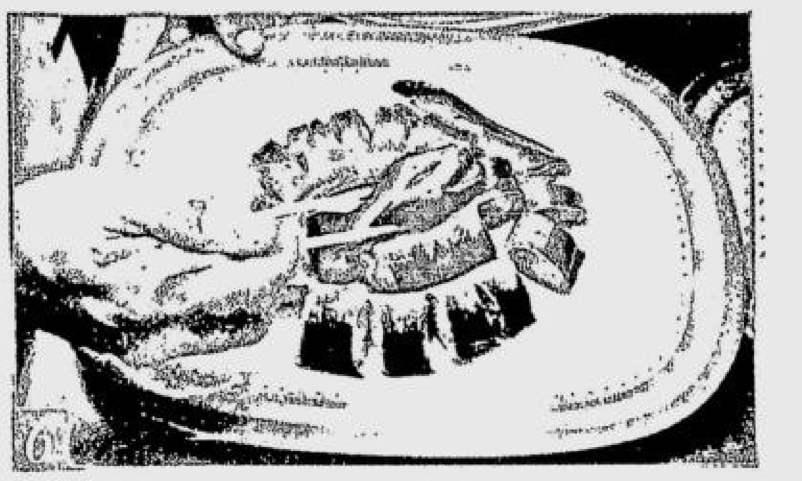
You can do various creative, delicious, easy-to-prepare meals that don't need a lot of time, such as this Savory Steamed Eel with Tausi prepared by Seafood Wharf.

"Eel has a rich, sweet and firm meat that's ideal for any form of cooking," says William Liong, chef and overall operations manager of Seafood Wharf at the Army and Navy Club Compound, South Road, Luneta Park, Manila (tel. 5363522). "The Chinese usually prepare eel in simple ways like steaming, seasoned only with salt and pepper or flavored with *tausi* or chili sauce."

Sometimes, eel is dipped in batter and then deep-fried.

This long, snake-like fish found in both fresh and saltwater has a smooth scaleless skin. Liong says fresh eels are available year-round. Fresh eel, which should be refrigerated and used within a day or two, costs about P120/100g.

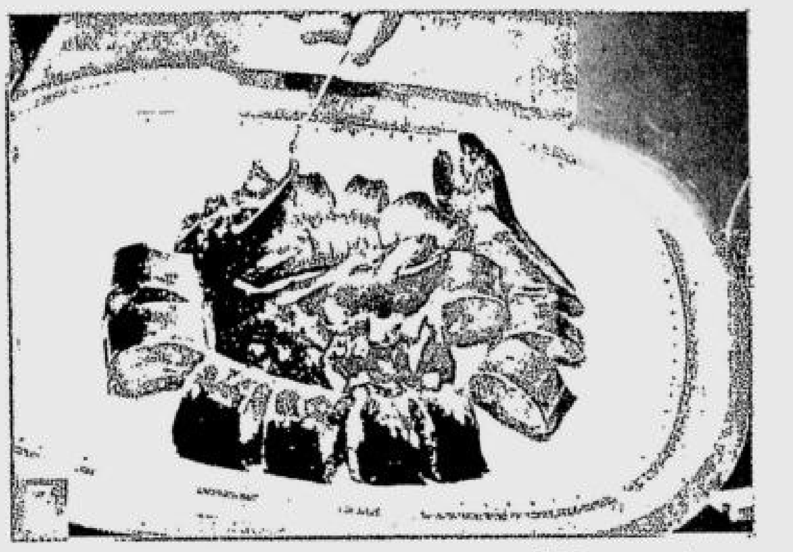
For this recipe, Chinese wine is used, as well as *tausi* (canned fermented black beans), which is commonly used in Chinese dishes. Both ingredients are available in most supermarkets.



ARRANGE the two halves of eel on a platter.

Ingredients

2 pounds eel, cleaned and gutted
2 tbsp garlic, chopped
½ c green and red bell pepper
2 tbsp onion, chopped
1 tbsp sugar
½ tbsp salt
½ tbsp chili powder
½ tbsp white pepper
2 tbsp Chinese wine
2 tbsp oyster sauce
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp sesame oil
2 tbsp tausi
2 tbsp cornstarch
3 tbsp corn oil



ADD prepared mixture and steam for 15-20 minutes. After steaming, sprinkle with spring onions and top with 1 tbsp hot corn oil. Serve warm.

For suggestions, e-mail vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

A new caffeine rush

NESTLÉ introduces Coffee Rush, a combination of ice cream and the stimulating flavor of Nescafé, the No. 1 coffee brand. The new concoction is also loaded with the chewy, crunchy textures of cashew and peanuts and chocolate chips.

Nestlé Coffee Rush Ice Cream provides coffee flavor in the form of cool, creamy goodness. Since it is also a dairy product, Nestlé Coffee Rush Ice Cream contains 10 percent calcium. Nestlé Coffee Rush Ice Cream is available in supermarkets, groceries, and convenience stores nationwide now.

International Distillers Philippines, Inc. (now known as Diageo Philippines, Inc.) apologizes to Ms. Ma. Theresa O. Matera for the inclusion of her picture, and the caption thereunder, in the Smirnoff Mule advertisement published in the Lifestyle Section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer on 20 September 1999.

Basics of cooking

LEARN the basics of cooking at Maya Kitchen's "Basic Cooking," 9 a.m.-2 p.m., July 5-8 or July 19-22.

The class teaches kitchen fundamentals like proper hygiene, sanitation and safety; nutrition and nutritional cooking; proper mis-en-place of mirepoix; stocks, soups, sauces, marinades; use of herbs and spices combinations; proper purchasing and storage; techniques of disjointing and boning poultry, filleting fish and meat fabrication.

Also included is actual preparation of dishes from appetizer, salad, eggs, pasta, seafood, poultry and meats all the way to dessert including garnishing for plate presentation. Participants get a free "Mix and Match" cookbook.

Meanwhile, "Basic Cake Decorating," 9 a.m.-4 p.m., July 9 and 16, teaches the art of creating delicious and beautiful desserts. Students learn the fundamentals of cake decorating: coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, caramel, chocolate, sugar icing), basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flowers including bunching.

Individual workshops on icing application and cake designing will be conducted.

Maya Kitchen also offers recipe research and product development, food and beverage consultancy and staff training, provincial demonstration, and on-the-job training program.

Call the Maya Kitchen (Tuesday to Saturdays) at 8/F Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz (formerly Pasay Road), Makati City or call 8921185 or 8925011 local 108. E-mail mkitchen@ultimate.info.ph.

Learn Mom's recipes for entertaining

THE REGGIE Aspiras School of Culinary Arts offers the following classes:

July 8—More of Mom's Recipes for Entertaining (all new)—Mom's Delicious Puchero, Callos, Baked Spareribs, Baked Prawns with Sauces, Tuna Dill Salad, Angus Bistek Tagalog with Bistek Rice, Mango Cream Pie

July 9—Teriyaki—Learn the secrets to perfect teriyaki sauce; Four Sauce Variations: chicken, salmon, burgers, steak, pork chops, whole roasted US Hanger Tender (delicious marinated whole hanger tender slabs)

July 11—Garlic (all new)— Mixed Greens with garlic dressing, Garlic Poulet au Pot with Aioli, Delicious Whole Pork with Sauce of Chili and Garlic, Garlic Steamed Fish, Delicious Garlic Lamb, Chuck Steaks with Garlic, Garlic Stuffed Roast Beef; side dishes, dessert

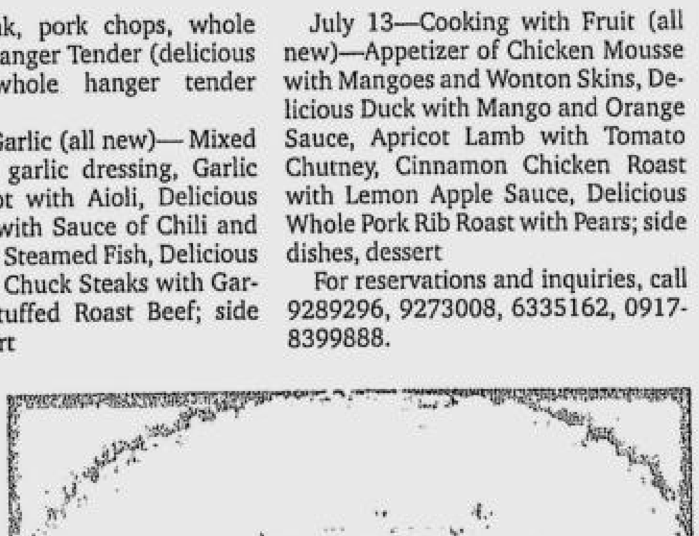
July 13—Cooking with Fruit (all new)—Appetizer of Chicken Mousse with Mangoes and Wonton Skins, Delicious Duck with Mango and Orange Sauce, Apricot Lamb with Tomato Chutney, Cinnamon Chicken Roast with Lemon Apple Sauce, Delicious Whole Pork Rib Roast with Pears; side dishes, dessert

For reservations and inquiries, call 9289296, 9273008, 6335162, 0917-8399888.

Satisfying meal for champs

JOLLIBEE Champ premium burger is made from 100-percent pure beef, topped with mayo and the freshest lettuce and tomatoes. Available at only P80 for solo orders, or P107 when you order with regular fries and drink.

Men have been found to favor Jollibee Champ for its sheer size and taste—juicy ¾-lbs burger patty topped with a whole lot of the good stuff.



JOLLIBEE Champ

PENK'S "Sewing"-Themed Cake. Everything is edible, even the scissors.

Avoid the 'frying pan'

MULTI-TASKING mothers can avoid accidents like minor skin burns or charred food when frying by following a few simple tips.

Pure Wesson Cooking Oil suggests the following:

• Oil foaming. This is caused by cooking starchy food (like breaded meats) or food with a high moisture content. Oil foaming also happens when food is fried at a very high temperature or when the pan is overloaded.

Remedy: Make sure you fry at recommended temperatures. Also, remember to thaw and drain food properly before placing it in the pan. To avoid overloading, the ratio of the food to oil is 6:1.

• Smoking and oil darkening. This happens when frying is done at a very high temperature. Burned sugar or crumbs may also cause darkening.

Remedy: Reduce the temperature during slack periods. Strain crumbs and other food particles that settled at the bottom of the pan before frying. Avoid reusing oil. Always use refined oil with high smoking points.

• Oil spattering. This happens when excess liquid gets into the oil.

Remedy: Drain food properly before dropping into the oil. Do not use wet tongs, baskets or any other utensil when frying.

• Greasy foods. This occurs when frying temperature is too low, the oil used has low melting point or there is an excessive use of batter or breading on the food.

Remedy: Use oil with lower melting point, as this has a more efficient drain-off. Also use a minimum amount of breading or batter and fry at recommended temperatures.

In frying, the cooking oil contributes to the taste and over-all quality of foods. Pure Wesson Cooking Oil makes fried foods crispy and golden outside and juicy inside, while allowing the cook's own seasoning to shine through. It is highly purified and contains zero gram of trans-fatty acids per serving. It is also naturally cholesterol-free.

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Circles and choices

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

KR presents extraordinary Indian food, a prize-winning menu, a recipe for godly pastry, a good read for bakers, etc.

IF THERE'S any place on earth to attest to the authenticity of the statement that "life is filled with choices," it's Circles at the Makati Shang. Each dining experience I've had there was a pleasant ordeal of what to eat.

Circles is known for many things... The chocolate fountain that awed many when it first opened, the endless supply of succulent roast beef, their signature chocolate cake and the many food theaters and stations to choose from. Perhaps no other buffet setup in the country serves food from all corners of the globe at the same time under one roof.

My sister Cristy picked Circles to celebrate her "_th" birthday. After an hour of me going around in circles, carefully deciding what to eat, I finally opted to go Indian, something I truly love and enjoy. I ate curries, from *paneer* to vegetable to every conceivable animal it could be made from. With chutney of all sorts, from mango to coriander. And with all that, delicious *dhal*, *naan* and pilaf! I thought it to be excellent!

So why is this particular experience one that I felt I must share with you? Well, two reasons. First, it serves as a reminder that some of the best surprises are quietly tucked away in places that you least expect them, like the Asian Theater. Second, never judge a book by its cover so to speak. It doesn't mean that when it smells funny, it tastes funky! So on your next trip to Circles and you feel you can't have a bite more of the usual leafy greens, pasta, smoked salmon and roast beef, I strongly urge you to try the Asian Theater adventure!

More good news from the Makati Shang! Summer Palace is back and has a whole new menu of exciting Chinese dishes to offer. Last I heard they flew in two new Chinese chefs. I imagine this to be the best place in town to relive the glory days of Chinese Imperial cuisine!

Chef talk

One of the things that make me happy is to see my colleagues turn chapter upon chapter in their lives and careers, with each new chapter, it seems, more glorious than the previous ones.

Chef Ariel Manuel (who time and again has proven to us that he was up-front on the day God gave talent away) won the Black Box Culinary Challenge. Luckily, he decided to do a promotion of his winning menu.

The menu is a must try: Assortment of Oysters—fresh, gratinated, and baked; Bento Box of Appetizers—Home Smoked Monkfish, Marinated Salmon with Soy Jelly, Crab and Foie Gras Hakow and Sweet Pepper Gazpacho with Shrimp Crostini; Lolo Dad's Smoke Belcher's Sherbet—Peach, Pepper and Chili; "Castricums"—Roasted Lamb Cutlet, Lamb Shoulder Ragout and Potato Lamb Meat Pie; Tasting of Desserts—Green Tea-Pistachio Ice Cream Ravioli, Deep Fried Chocolate Mochi, Strawberry Sushi!

With a menu like that, I rest my case! To dearest Ariel and Mia, as always, my toque off to you! (Lolo Dad's tels. 5242295 or 0922-8125967)

Godly food

Lately, Food for the Gods has been among the most requested recipes on KR. Here's a recipe by the highly skilled and very talented Penk Ching (tel. 0917-8122676). For any occasion that is extra special to you, get her to do your cake! Especially for couture cakes... Fancy themed fondant with intricate designs or cakes *"na naka-bordang kalado!"* Penk is to the cake world what Joe Salazar was to fashion!

Food for the Gods

8 oz walnuts, chopped
8 oz pitted dates, chopped
1 c all-purpose flour
1 ½ c butter
2 eggs
1/3 c sugar
¾ c brown sugar, packed
2 tbsp honey (heaping tablespoons)
½ tsp baking soda

Cream butter, with eggs, sugar and brown sugar. Add all purpose flour, baking soda. Add walnuts, dates, honey. Pour into 9" x 13" pan, lined with foil. Bake 350°F for 15 minutes. Then turn to 325°F for another 30 minutes.

Penk says: Best served the day after it is baked. Use only the best ingredients.

Hot off the press

Last week, I worked with Nana Ozaeta of F&B World. She gifted me with a copy of her magazine. Inside it was the good news, a supplement called Baking Press (tel. 7259984). For all those in the business or for those who are into baking as a hobby, this is a great read. It comes with all sorts of information: A directory of places to go for ingredients, equipment, new trends; step by step recipes and a lot of answers to questions you usually text me for.

The clincher is every pastry personality that comes to mind is a contributor! From chef Ernie Babaran, John Lu Koa and Dennis Hipolito to Penk Ching and Heny Sison! Well done, Nana! Congratulations!

Speaking of pastry chef Dennis Hipolito (tel: 0917-8486656). This friend of mine is all geared up for the holiday season. He gifted me with cakes and loaves to try. I've had many orange poppy seed loaves in my lifetime and his is one of the best!

Delayed gratification

Remember last week's sinfully delicious Mabanta Tocino del Cielo? For some strange reason we lost a digit of his contact number. But what was lost is now found! Alleluia! To order, call 0917-8461952.

For questions and comments text 0917 - 8399888.

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You can also visit us us at the **World Trade Center Expo** on **July 15-17, 2005**. Drop by the Free Franchise Orientation at the Activity Center on July 17, 2005 from 2:30-3:30 pm.

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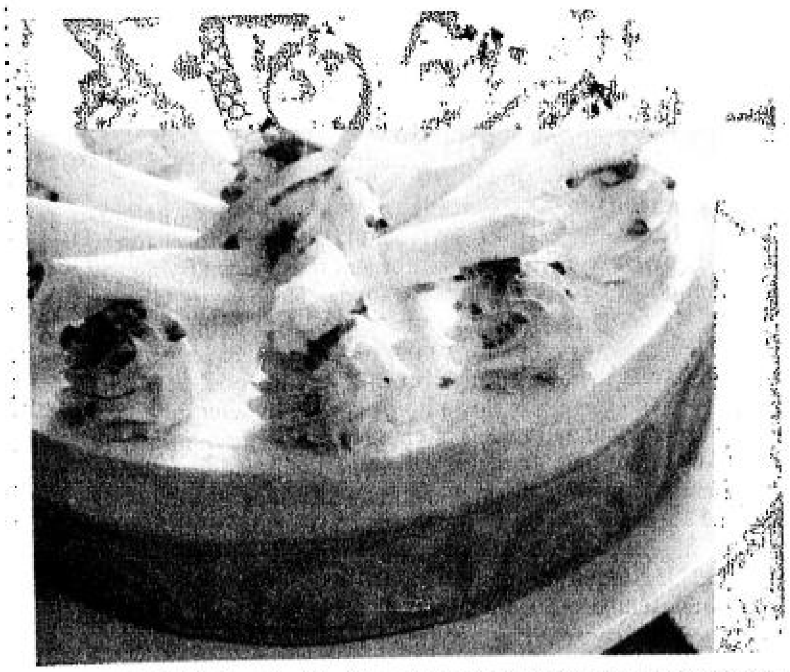
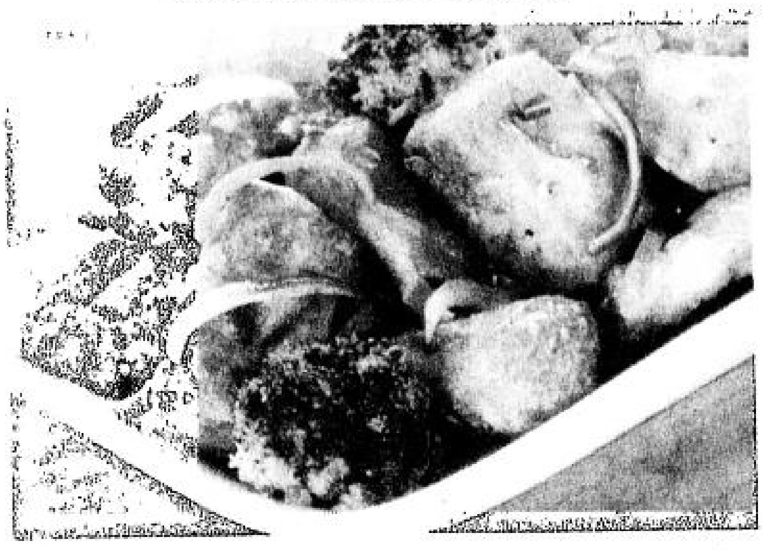


THE BELLEVUE Hotel offers Guyabano Delight a la Russe as its Cake of the Month. This creation is sloshed with Kurant Vodka, made creamier with Bavarois cake and topped with icing, nuts and white chocolate shavings. Call 7718181.



WONTON Restaurant and Catering Services has opened a second branch in Greenhills Shopping Center. Its menu includes Fried Shrimp Puff with sweet mayo dip, Beef Yakiniku rice topping, Aromatic Chicken Wings covered with a light breaded crust and dipped in light and sweet vinegar, Shrimp Wonton noodle soup, Dumplings of Fresh Shrimps in soup and noodles. Wonton Restaurant accepts delivery orders and catering for any occasion. Call 7272183 for 197 Wilson St. corner P. Guevara, San Juan; or 7276849 for Unit 70 Level A, Shoppesville Arcade, Greenhills Shopping Center.

MANILA Diamond Hotel's Yurakuen serves Special Shoyu Ramen with roasted pork fillets, Ebi Gyoza with roasted asparagus and Cold Noodle with various toppings until July 31. Call 5283000.

China's nourishing culinary treasures

DINING OUT

MANDARIN Oriental Manila's Tin Hau offers the best of bird's nest and Buddha soups on July 18-31. The restaurant features Buddha Jumps Over the Wall soup, Sautéed Bird's Nest with egg white and shredded Chinese ham, Minced Shrimp and Bamboo Pith, Braised Bird's Nest with crab roe, Minced Chicken or Seafood, Bird's Nest in Coconut Milk and Pan-fried Omelet with Bird's Nest and Crabmeat Pei-pa Style. Call 7508888.

THE PENINSULA Manila's Spices Restaurant presents the Indian Curry Festival until July 29. A curry buffet is available during lunch, dinner is a la carte. Call 8872888.

INTERCONTINENTAL Manila serves Seven Wonders Daiquiri. Concocted from rum, cointreau or triple sec, calamansi nectar, sugar cane syrup and ice, it is flavored with fresh fruit of one's choice: pineapple, avocado, strawberry, apple, melon, green or yellow mango and banana with peanut. Seven Wonders is available at all hotel food and beverage outlets.

THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza's Café Plaza Too presents Crab Mentality until July 31. The menu includes Chili Crabs, Crab Cakes, Deep-fried Crab Claws, Tempura Softshell Crab, Salt and Pepper Crispy Crablets and Bisque. Call 5515555.

CASA Armas features Platos Combinados lunch value meals with free iced tea and dessert. Agachos en Adobo, Calamares ala Plancha, Lengua Estofada, Zarzuela de Mariscos, Salpicao, Callos, Arroz ala Cobana are offered at affordable prices. Casa Armas is at Paseo Center, Paseo de Roxas Avenue cor. Sedeno Street; Greenbelt 3, Makati (7574961); 132 Jupiter St., Bel-Air Village, Makati (8973542); The Podium, Ortigas Center (6873663).

THE LEGEND Villas' Lola Maria serves the Rainy Day Souprise, 5-10 p.m., until July 31. Soup selections, such as Nilagang Bias ng Baka, Sopa de Mariscos, Seafood Chowder, Pancit Molo, Hot and Sour Gazpacho, Sinigang na Tiyan ng Bangus and Salmon Belly, are offered with an assortment of bread. Call 6331501 to 10.

HYATT Regency's Tempura Misono Japanese Restaurant hosts Sake To Me until July 31. The promo features hot or cold sake in combination with other Nippon treats like Sashimi Moriwasa, Nigiri Sushi, California Maki and Sushi Sashimi. Call 8331234.

UNA Mas invites children 4 feet and below to have their fill of the buffet spread for free on Saturdays and Sundays until July 31. The spread features fun croquettes, twirly pastas, colorful paellas, prime striploin, Banana Flan, Mexican Gateau and fresh fruits. Tapa Platter, on the other hand, is available 6:30-10 p.m., Mondays-Fridays. Call Una Mas Greenhills at 7230012 and Una Mas Greenbelt at 7573357.

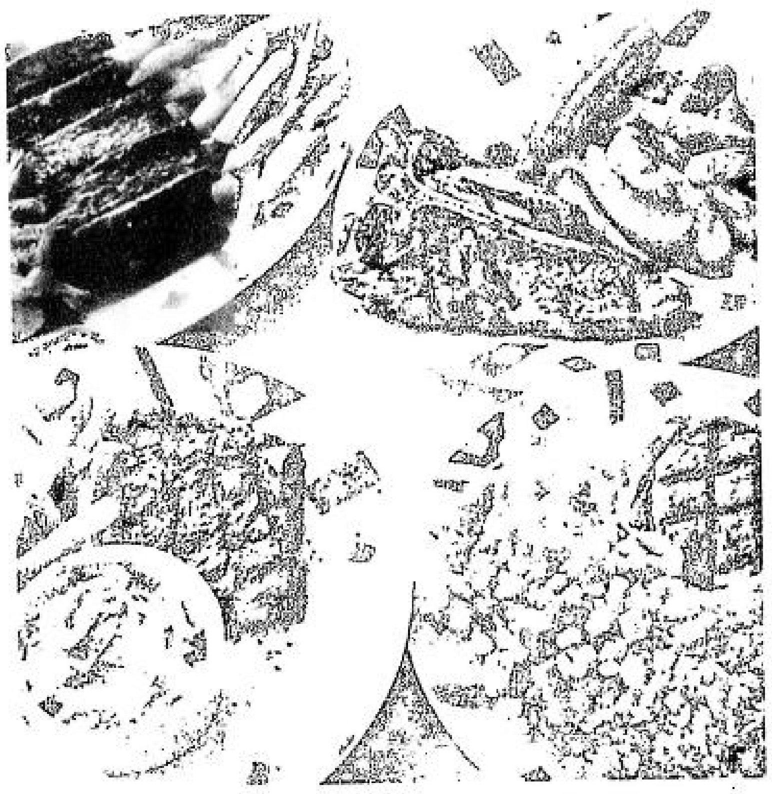
DUSIT Hotel Nikko's Benjarong Royal Thai Restaurant presents Chef Recommends July 11-31. Featured are Seafood with Special Sauce Salad, Deep-fried Lapu-lapu with green mango sauce and Grilled Prawns and Squid with chili sauce. Call 8673333.

UCC Coffee is the latest member of the WiFi hotspot-in-a-cafe community. The WiFi connection is offered in UCC cafés at The Podium, Ortigas; Forbestown Center, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig; and Paseo Center, Makati. UCC Coffee WiFi prepaid cards are available for P100 per 60 minutes.

ALL THE BEST.

Lechon, a favorite Filipino dish, comes alive with every sip of Carlo Rossi.

Carlo Rossi
CALIFORNIA RED



BURGOO American Bar and Restaurant presents The Ultimate Steak and Seafood Combo. The promo features Bacon-wrapped US Steak grilled or pan-seared, Bacon-wrapped Grilled Prawns served with US biscuit bread and cream-cheese-filled munchers (or your choice of any side dishes), topped with a choice of onion-mushroom gravy or garlic-sage sauce. Every two orders of this combo come with a free dessert. Burgoo is located at 310 Tomas Morato Extension, South Triangle Diliman, QC; The Podium, Ortigas Center; Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati; The Promenade, Greenhills, San Juan; Gateway Mall, Araneta Center. Call 9277424/6875254/8981815/7263578/9136112.

Traditional favorites become healthier

GRILL Asia on Tomas Morato in Quezon City offers healthier versions of traditional Asian favorite dishes.

As the restaurant's name implies, many of the main dishes are grilled. Kervin Valero says Grill Asia, responding to the growing number of health conscious eaters, seared food with just the right amount of heat to preserve natural juices. Dishes do not need sauces to enhance their flavors.

Valero and his cousin Jorge developed the recipes of Grill Asia. Among its bestsellers is Kalbi (Korean beef ribs). Instead of the traditional version with short ribs bathed with sauce, the restaurant's recipe looks more like meaty, American-style ribs.

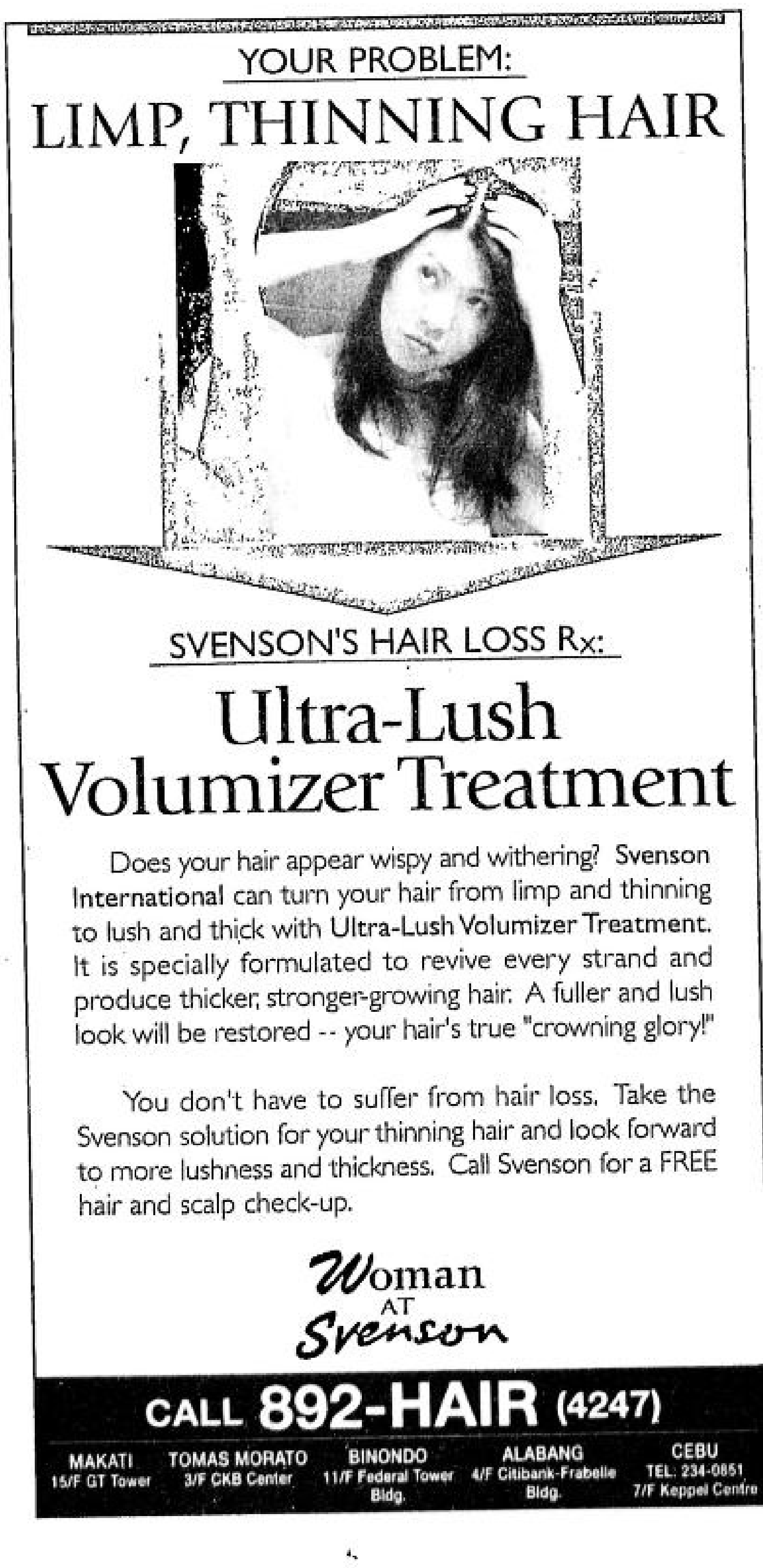
ASPARAMAKI, fresh asparagus wrapped in Japanese pork barbecue, is one of Grill Asia's crowd-drawers.

Asparamaki (fresh asparagus) is wrapped in Japanese pork barbecue—not the usual bacon. Yakiniku, pork grilled Japanese style, is less greasy and less salty but leaner and more flavorful.

Adobo, renamed Manila's Thrilla, consists of 300 g of pork ribs that are first simmered in soy sauce, vinegar and garlic. The ribs are then barbecued in a flame grill that uses lava rocks to keep the heat consistent while adding a smokey flavor to the food. They are then basted with a sweet chili glaze.

Valero adds that dishes were served in generous portions, with prices ranging from P260 for four pieces of prawns in a pepper sauce to P125 for six skewers of grilled Malay chicken with peanut sauce.

Grill Asia's bestselling dessert, Fiesta Pockets, which combines the ingredients of *guinataan* in a crispy spring roll that is served with vanilla ice cream and chocolate syrup, costs P65.



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BLACKPEPPER Crab, one of Singapore's Ten Must-Tries

A festival for gourmets and gourmands

Singapore has a food event planned for practically each day of the month of July

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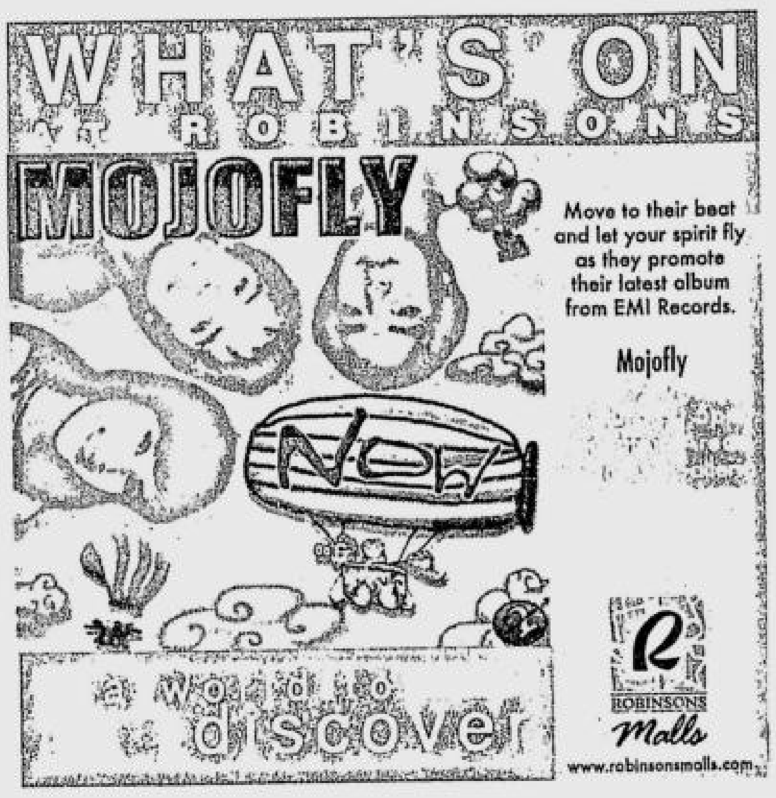

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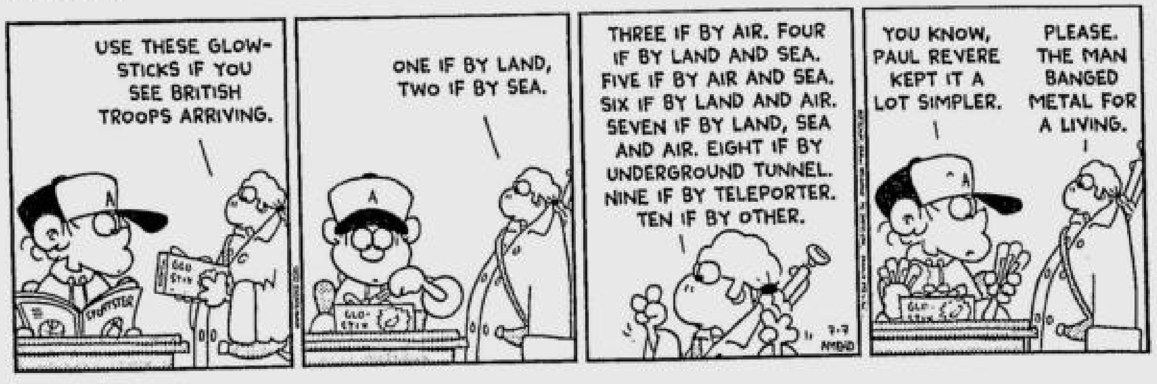
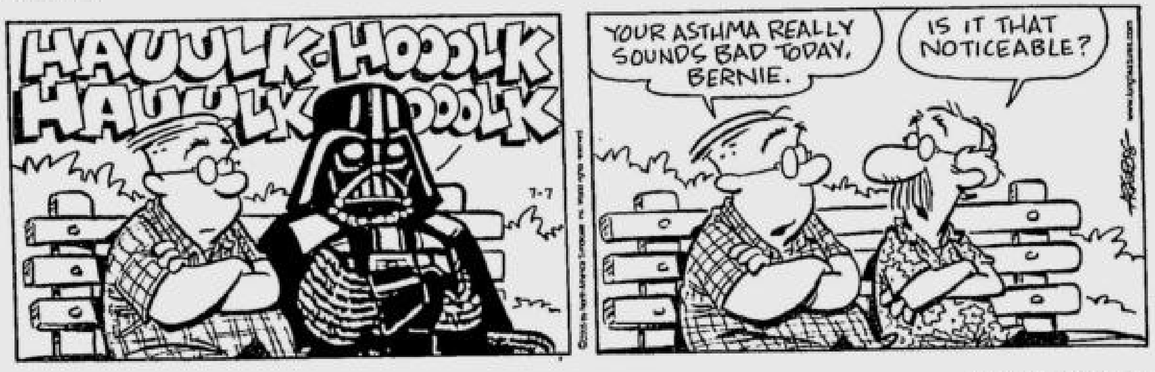
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


USE THESE GLOW-STICKS IF YOU SEE BRITISH TROOPS ARRIVING.
ONE IF BY LAND, TWO IF BY SEA.
THREE IF BY AIR. FOUR IF BY LAND AND SEA. FIVE IF BY AIR AND SEA. SIX IF BY LAND AND AIR. SEVEN IF BY LAND, SEA AND AIR. EIGHT IF BY UNDERGROUND TUNNEL. NINE IF BY TELEPORTER. TEN IF BY OTHER.
YOU KNOW, PAUL REVERE KEPT IT A LOT SIMPLER.
PLEASE. THE MAN BANGED METAL FOR A LIVING.
GLO-STIK
7-7

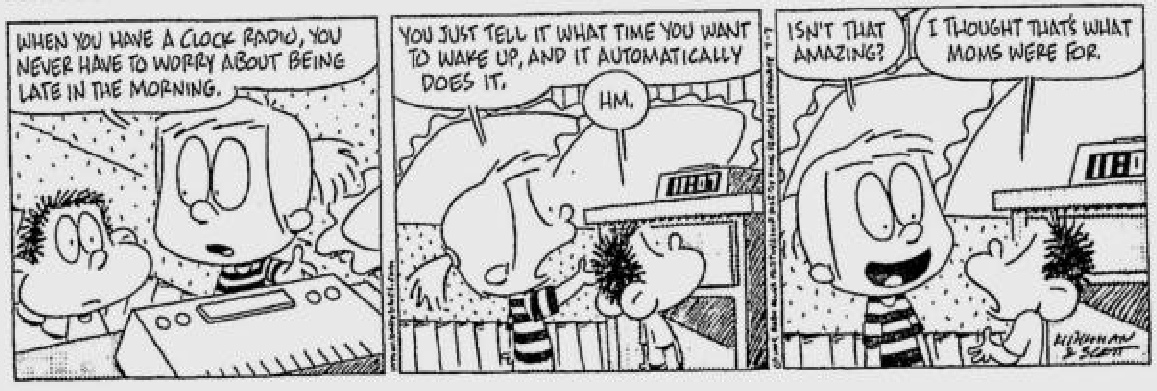
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


HAUUULK-HOOOLK HAUUULK HOOOLK
7-7
YOUR ASTHMA REALLY SOUNDS BAD TODAY, BERNIE.
IS IT THAT NOTICEABLE?

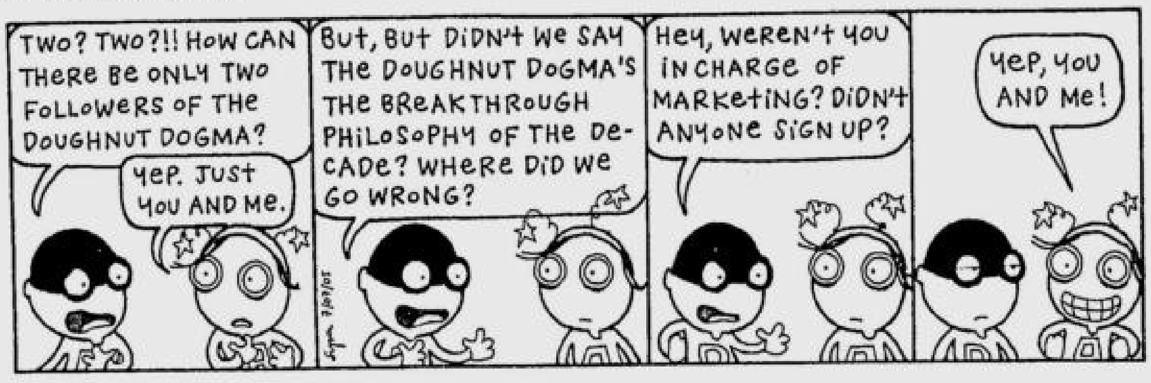
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHEN YOU HAVE A CLOCK RADIO, YOU NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT BEING LATE IN THE MORNING.
YOU JUST TELL IT WHAT TIME YOU WANT TO WAKE UP, AND IT AUTOMATICALLY DOES IT.
HM.
ISN'T THAT AMAZING?
I THOUGHT THAT'S WHAT MOMS WERE FOR.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


TWO? TWO?!! HOW CAN THERE BE ONLY TWO FOLLOWERS OF THE DOUGHNUT DOGMA?
YEP. JUST YOU AND ME.
BUT, BUT DIDN'T WE SAY THE DOUGHNUT DOGMA'S THE BREAKTHROUGH PHILOSOPHY OF THE DECADE? WHERE DID WE GO WRONG?
HEY, WEREN'T YOU IN CHARGE OF MARKETING? DIDN'T ANYONE SIGN UP?
YEP, YOU AND ME!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a natural sense of humor. You also have a strong sense of justice and fair play. Family is important to you. You are well-organized, faithful and reliable. You are devoted to your loved ones. You're capable of great accomplishments. You face interesting choices in the coming year. Choose wisely.
Birthdate of: Michelle Kwan, ice skater; Ringo Starr, musician; Pierre Cardin, designer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today, you feel as graceful as a gazelle. If you can, you'll do a pirouette. You feel elegant and very tuned-in to the needs of those around you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're going to do something secretive today. It will most likely be connected to passion and romance—stolen candy. Of course, sometimes candy isn't stolen; it's just a guilty pleasure.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Work with others to improve something or to reform a situation. This is an excellent day to join forces with any charitable group. A collective effort can go a long way.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Recent insights into different things might alter your goals now. You see that pursuing a certain line of action didn't get you what you wanted. It's time to rethink things.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Make an effort to enjoy the beauty of the world around you. Whether it's natural beauty or a beauty created by others through architecture, art, crafts or literature, you'll feel rewarded.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might want to use your resources or the resources of others to benefit those who are needy today. It seems to be the best idea right now.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You quite easily sense someone else's needs today. Because of this, you're more inclined to help this person. (You're not into ego-gratification.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): It's a pleasure working with others on the job today. Cooperation is easy! This is because you're sympathetic to the demands and needs of others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Grab any opportunity that comes your way to express your creativity and freedom in a lighthearted way. It's a lovely day to play, fantasize and relax.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You want to help someone today—probably a family member, perhaps a parent. You don't mind going out of your way. Nothing is too much trouble; it just needs to be done.

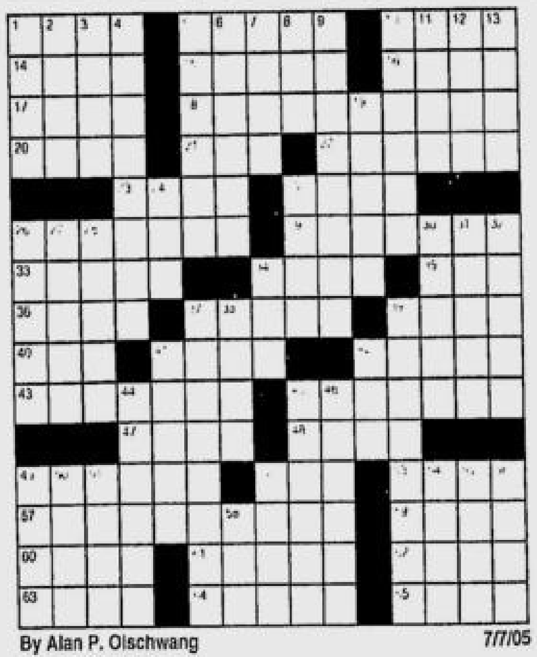
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Where before there was disagreement, today there could be consensus and cooperation. Being competitive with someone is no fun, and it's totally anti-productive.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You want to buy something quite luxurious today. You feel you deserve it. The desire alone is sufficient to warrant your getting whatever it is you want. Life is short.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Amorphous mass
5 Jimmy of "N.Y.P.D. Blue"
10 Filmdom flop
14 VIP's wheels
15 Dogma
16 Operatic song
17 Hydrox rival
18 Start of Jean Kerr quote
20 Armored vehicle
21 Whitney's invention
22 Fox of the Sox
23 Tibetan monk
25 Idee __
26 Part 2 of quote
29 Alter again
33 Half-pints
34 QB option
35 Game of marbles
36 Greek letters
37 Part 3 of quote
39 Recently deceased
40 Schedule abbr.
41 Wildebeests
42 Eagle's nest
43 Microwave setting
45 Part 4 of quote
47 Woe is me!
48 Australian birds
49 Skater Dorothy
52 Med. scan
53 Acacia or baobab
57 End of quote
59 Strung up
60 Indy-winner Luyendyk
61 Mistake
62 Ray of "Battle Cry"
63 Anglers' gear
64 Diplomat Silas
65 Scottish loch

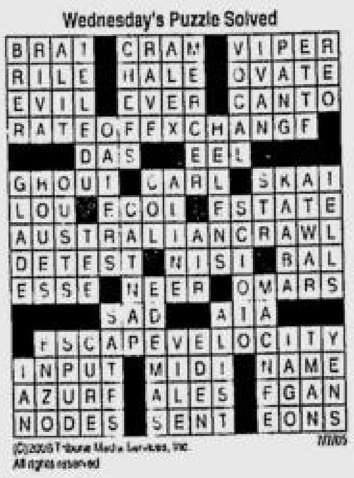
DOWN
1 Ink smudge
2 Old Italian bread?
3 Harbinger
4 Light reading?
5 Mark of disgrace
6 Strip on the highway
7 Party to
8 Back row pin
9 Most insensitive
10 Cried loudly
11 Preacher Roberts
12 Short skirt
13 Moderate
19 Second largest state
24 Dem candidate of the '50s
25 Lady of the haus
26 Tire pattern
27 Bizarre
28 Devour greedily
30 Space Invaders company
31 Outdoor dining area
32 Twixt
34 IBM units
37 Like some 38D
38 Kernels
39 Falling short of
41 Gee whiz!
42 Island group in the Moluccas
44 "Hail the Conquering Hero" star Ella
45 Dancing Castle
46 Political exile
49 Icy frost
50 Big hairdo
51 Robin's Marian, for one
52 Actress Sorvino
54 As a __ (usually)
55 Conclusions
56 Teamwork obstacles
58 Otto I's realm


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
14 15 16
17 18 19
20 21 22
23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31 32
33 34 35
36 37 38
39 40 41
42 43 44 45 46
47 48
49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56
57 58 59
60 61 62
63 64 65

By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

7/7/05

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved


BRAT CRAM VIPER
RILE HALE OVATE
EVIL EVER CANTO
RATEOFEXCHANGE
DAS EEL
GHOUL CARL SKAT
LOU ECOL ESTATE
AUSTRALIANCRAWL
DETEST NISI BAL
ESSE NEER OMARS
SAD AIA
ESCAPEVELOCITY
INPUT MIDI NAME
AZURE ALES EGAN
NODES SENT EONS

7/7/05

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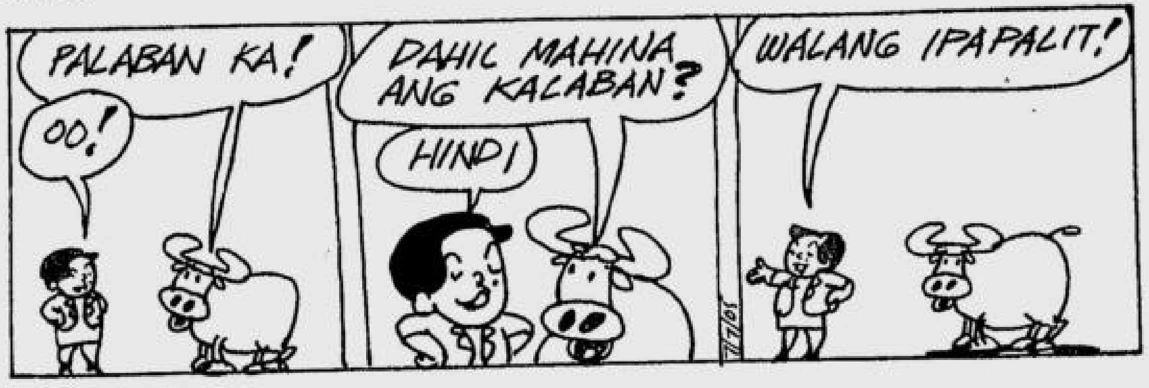
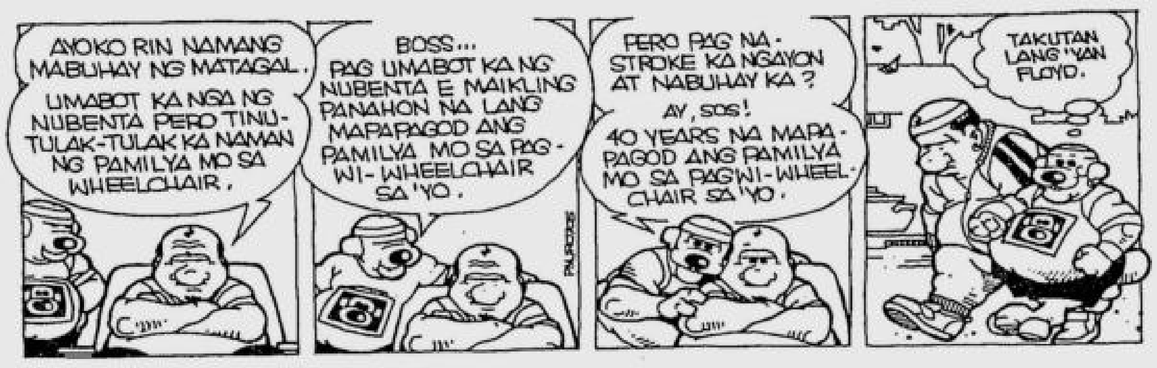
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PALABAN KA!
OO!
DAHIL MAHINA ANG KALABAN?
HINDI
WALANG IPAPALIT!
7/7/05

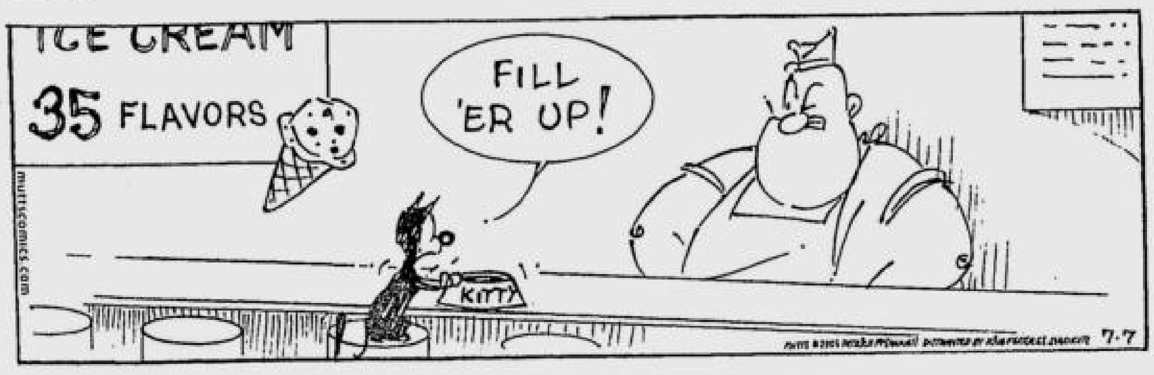
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


AYOKO RIN NAMANG MABUHAY NG MATAGAL.
UMABOT KA NGA NG NUBENTA PERO TINU-TULAK-TULAK KA NAMAN NG PAMILYA MO SA WHEELCHAIR.
BOSS... PAG UMABOT KA NG NUBENTA E MAIKLING PANAHON NA LANG MAPAPAGOD ANG PAMILYA MO SA PAG-WI-WHEELCHAIR SA 'YO.
PERO PAG NA-STROKE KA NGAYON AT NABUHAY KA?
AY, SOS!
40 YEARS NA MAPAPAGOD ANG PAMILYA MO SA PAGWI-WHEEL-CHAIR SA 'YO.
TAKUTAN LANG 'YAN FLOYD.

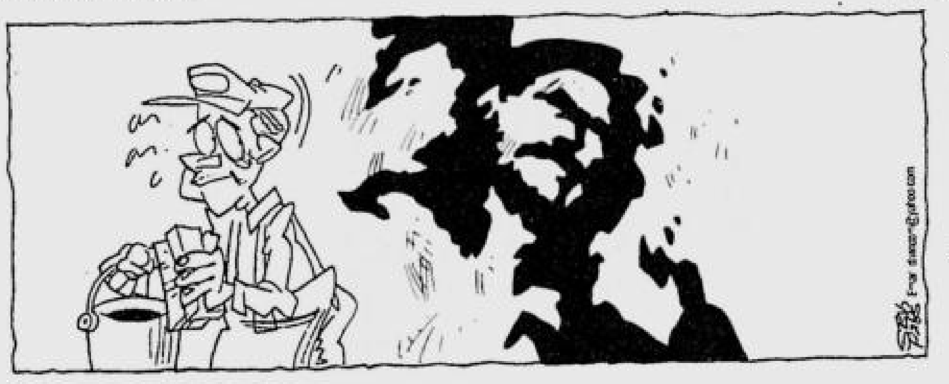
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


ICE CREAM
35 FLAVORS
FILL 'ER UP!
KITTY
muttscomics.com
7-7

DIVINE COMEDY

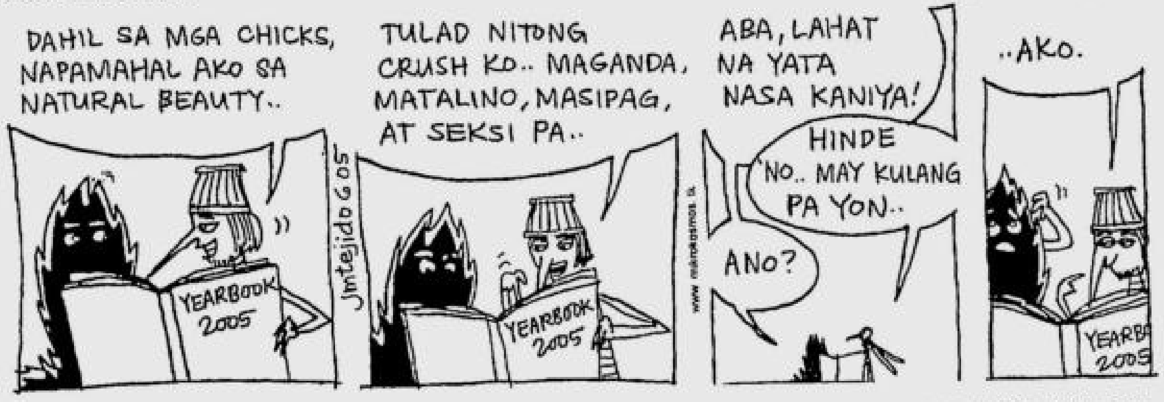
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HINDI DAHIL SA TINATAMAD SI MANG SITO NA LINISIN YUNG DUMI SA DINGDING. MERON LANG KASING KAKAIBANG HUGIS YUNG DUMI NA SYANG DAHILAN KUNG BAKIT NAGTAYUAN ANG MGA BALAHIBO NYA

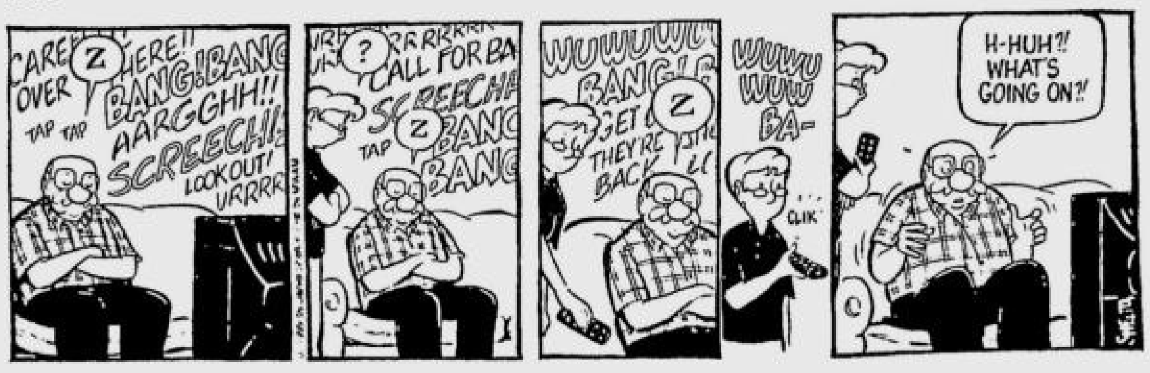
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


DAHIL SA MGA CHICKS, NAPAMAHAL AKO SA NATURAL BEAUTY..
YEARBOOK 2005
TULAD NITONG CRUSH KO.. MAGANDA, MATALINO, MASIPAG, AT SEKSI PA..
Jmtejido 6 05
ABA, LAHAT NA YATA NASA KANIYA!
HINDE 'NO.. MAY KULANG PA YON..
ANO?
..AKO.

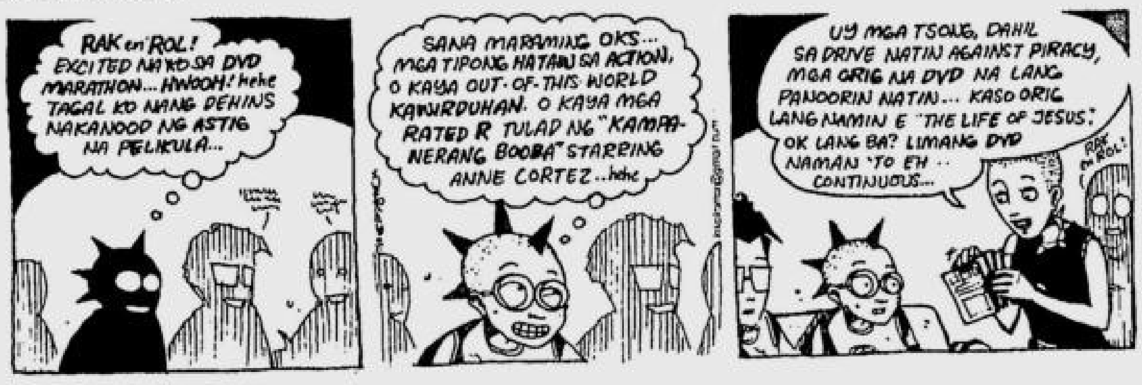
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


CARE OVER
Z
HERE!!
BANG!BANG
AARGGHH!!
SCREECH!
LOOKOUT!
URRRR
TAP TAP
?
RRRRKRR
CALL FOR BA
SCREECH
Z
TAP
BANG BANG
WUWUWU
BANG!
GET
Z
THEY'RE BACK
WUWU WUW BA-
CLIK
H-HUH?! WHAT'S GOING ON?!

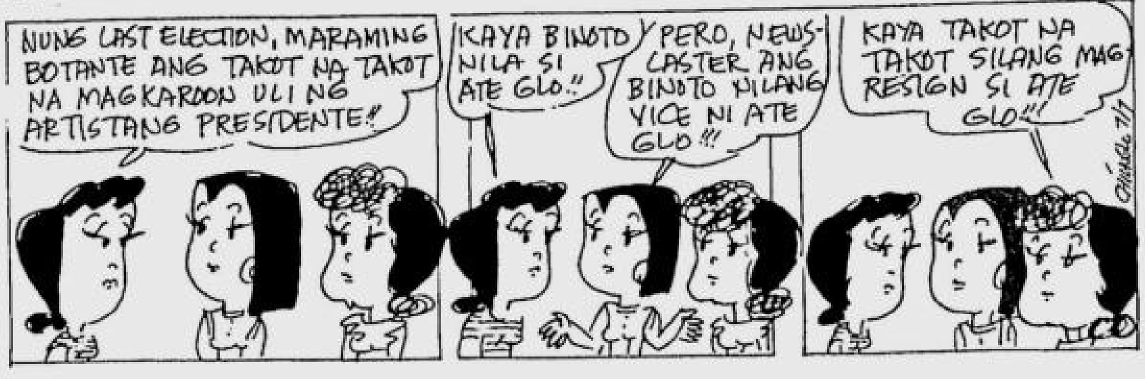
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


RAK en' ROL! EXCITED NA KO SA DVD MARATHON... HWOOH! hehe TAGAL KO NANG DEHINS NAKANOOD NG ASTIG NA PELIKULA...
SANA MARAMING OKS... MGA TIPONG HATAW SA ACTION, O KAYA OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD KAWIRDUHAN. O KAYA MGA RATED R TULAD NG "KAMPANERANG BOOBA" STARRING ANNE CORTEZ..hehe
UY MGA TSONG, DAHIL SA DRIVE NATIN AGAINST PIRACY, MGA ORIG NA DVD NA LANG PANOORIN NATIN... KASO ORIG LANG NAMIN E "THE LIFE OF JESUS". OK LANG BA? LIMANG DVD NAMAN 'TO EH.. CONTINUOUS...
RAK en' ROL!

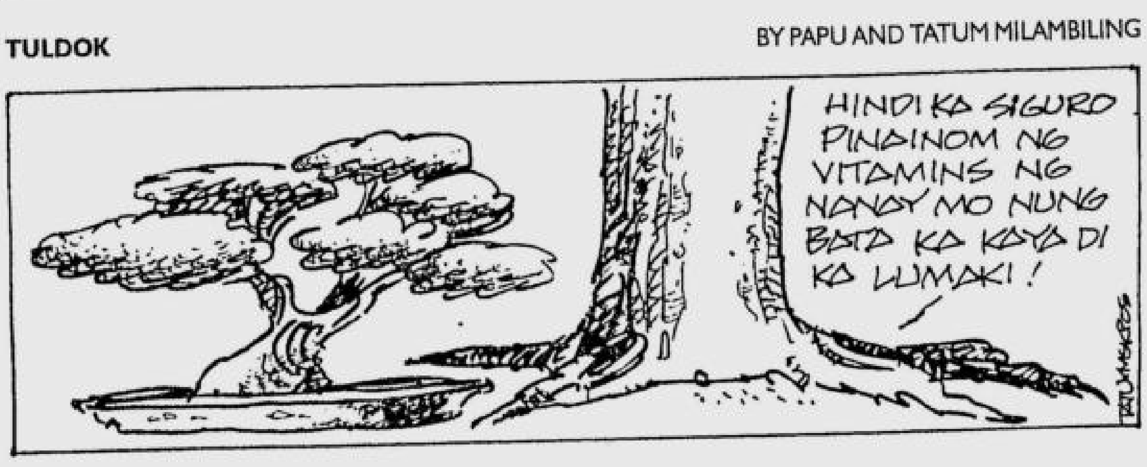
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NUNG LAST ELECTION, MARAMING BOTANTE ANG TAKOT NA TAKOT NA MAGKAROON ULI NG ARTISTANG PRESIDENTE!!
KAYA BINOTO NILA SI ATE GLO.!!
PERO, NEWSCASTER ANG BINOTO NILANG VICE NI ATE GLO!!!
KAYA TAKOT NA TAKOT SILANG MAG-RESIGN SI ATE GLO!!!
CHIONGLO 7/7

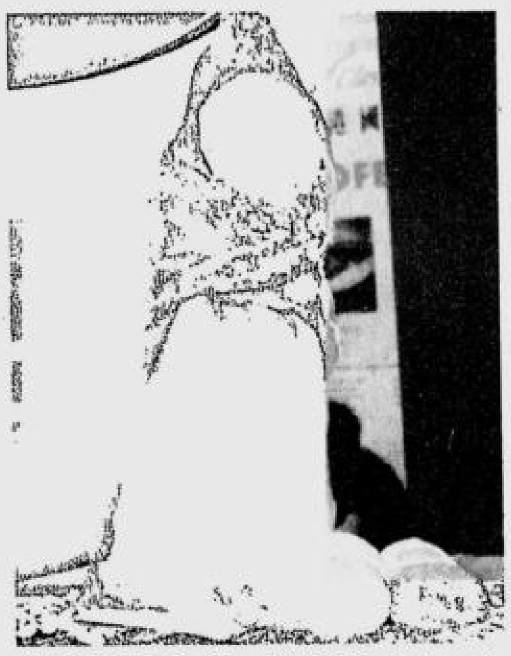
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


HINDI KA SIGURO PINAINOM NG VITAMINS NG NANAY MO NUNG BATA KA KAYA DI KA LUMAKI!

CHEFS in action

ANA Ortega, bronze medalist, Lamb Amateur Division



"THE BREAD Goddess," CCA Manila team's showpiece

Filipinos win in culinary competition

MARTHA Naguiat-Ebro with Hofex judge Xavier

AN ALL-WOMEN team from the Center for Culinary Arts (CCA, Manila) received the bronze medal in the Live Bakery Professional Division in a recent culinary competition in Hong Kong.

The team was composed of chefs Alma Cui, Ria Mariano and Martha Naguiat-Ebro.

CCA, Manila—the only culinary school cited as a Superbrand in the Philippines—was cited when it became the judges' and the crowd's favorite, thus winning the award.

The Hong Kong International Culinary Classic (HKICC) drew some 300 participants from 12 countries, including Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea.

The CCA, Manila team was the only one to use different kinds of dough kneaded by hand and prepared during the competition. The others prepared their ingredients in advance.

The Filipino team produced 10 different items within nine hours of competition. They included "Bread Goddess," their showpiece; Asian Rolls, Curry Butter Flake Roll, Vigan Longganisa Roll and Sesame Dilis Pandesal.

Chefs Tina Uy and James Antolin (coach) won in the Plated Dessert Amateur Division. The only Filipino in the division, Uy prepared Cornets with a layer of Chocolate Cocoa Nib Mousse and a hint of Mint Wasabi Crème Brulee finished with Beet Reduction Syrup in Vanilla Anglaise, and Velvety Banana Praline Mousse with Coffee Cardamom Anglaise.

Student Ana Ortega and chef Manuel de Borja (coach) was third in the Lamb Amateur Division. The only one who did the French cut on an untrimmed rack of lamb and used seven components, Ortega prepared a Spice-crusted Rack of Lamb with Boulanger Purse, Plum Sauce, Mint Oil, Vegetable Mélange, Arugula Salad and Strawberry Salsa.

HKICC was one of the highlights of the 11th Asian International Exhibition of Food and Drink, Hotel, Restaurant, and Food Service Equipment, Supplies and Services (Hofex 2005) held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center.

Call CCA, Manila at 4264840, e-mail: marketing@cca-manila.com or visit www.cca-manila.com.

TINA Uy with Hofex judge chef Eric Perez

Taxi hustlers back at the airport

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

CALLING the attention of the domestic airport manager! Those uniformed taxi barkers at the exit area are practically harassing passengers to take the AUV shuttle vans instead of metered cabs.

Passengers who know the huge difference in fare between these vans and ordinary taxis, don't mind the long queue at the metered cab lane. AUV taxis' flat rates is more than double the fare of metered cabs.

Last Monday, for example, it cost me only P180 in the metered cab for the trip to San Juan from the domestic airport. For that distance, an AUV taxi driver was quoting a P470 flat rate.

By the way, a passenger of Cathay Pacific who flew in from Xiamen last June 25, has this complaint about rude airline personnel at the baggage claim area.

The passenger said, "Due to a one-hour flight delay in Hong Kong, there wasn't enough time to load our luggage to our connecting flight to Manila. We arrived at Naia at 5 p.m., sans the luggage that came in a separate plane at 9:30 p.m.

"We checked the TV monitors for the carousel assignment. But what was supposed to be assigned to the HK flight was already being used by another airline. We tried to find out which was the right carousel by asking one of the men who was standing next to a signboard of Cathay Pacific.

"He told us to check the TV monitors. We said we already did that but the information was wrong. The man was inordinately annoyed and told us rather rudely, '*Hindi kami* information *ng* Cathay, *taga*-Continental *kami*.' True, he wore an ID, but the name of his company was difficult to read. And he could have been more polite about it. Besides, was it beneath him as a Continental employee to answer such a simple question?"

More on abusive drivers

Boots Sison wrote: "Allow me to (add to the complaint of) Claire Diaz... which appeared... June 30. The drivers used to charge P14 per passenger from the Caltex Station in Doña Soledad at Better Living to Edsa-Taft Avenue before the latest fare increase. The fare matrix was visibly posted inside the vehicle. This time, however, the same drivers charge P18 without the new fare matrix. They are also charging senior citizens P16 when the discounted rate should be P14.40."

Incidentally, someone wants to know who regulates FX fares. Only last Thursday, she paid P20 for a trip from De la Salle University in Manila to St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City. But last Tuesday, she was charged P25. Who approved the fare hike?

Praises and thank yous

Dick N. Echavez commends Fe de la Cruz, director of the corporate affairs office of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. He says, "She facilitated the release of a document that I had been waiting for these last two years (from) Citibank...I wish all public servants will perform their functions like director De la Cruz."

Pleased customer

Elias D. Micael 111 writes: "I just would like to thank the management and staff of Florsheim at Shangri-La Mall for good customer service. Mike and Peter, specifically, assisted me in replacing a defective pair of shoes... I hope the sales staff of other companies would be as customer-friendly as they are."

Globe explains

This is the reply of Globe to complaints about fees charged for balance inquiries. We quote a complaint from Globe subscriber Cesar Marinius M. Reyes of Cesmar Pharmacy in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte.

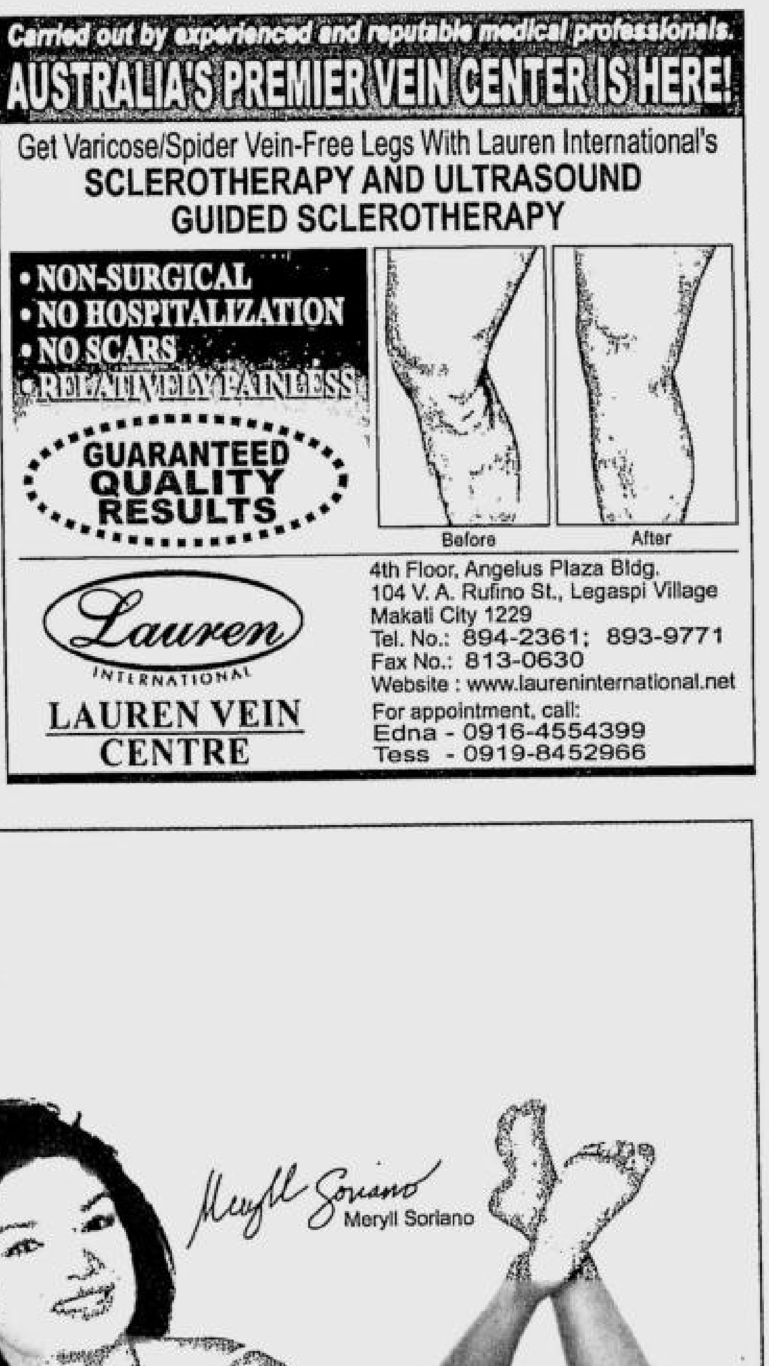
Marinius writes: "Last May 16, I received an advisory from Globe saying that starting May 13, one peso would be charged for every balance inquiry via 222. Why the three-day delay?"

Pinky Torres of Globe's customer service explained: "Notices to the public (about the fee) were released in three newspapers last April 14, namely: the Manila Standard, Manila Times and Malaya. Notices were also posted in our business centers nationwide.

In addition to that, the following text broadcast was sent to Globe's pre-paid subscribers: 'Effective May 13, 2005, every balance inquiry request via voice call to 222 will be charged P1. This move was approved by the National Telecommunications Commissions last March 10.'"

E-mail the author at mvgiron07@yahoo.com

> The Manila Domestic Airport had a very efficient way of managing cabs before, supervised by a security guard



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Tel. No.: 894-2361; 893-9771
Fax No.: 813-0630
Website : www.laureninternational.net
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Edna - 0916-4554399
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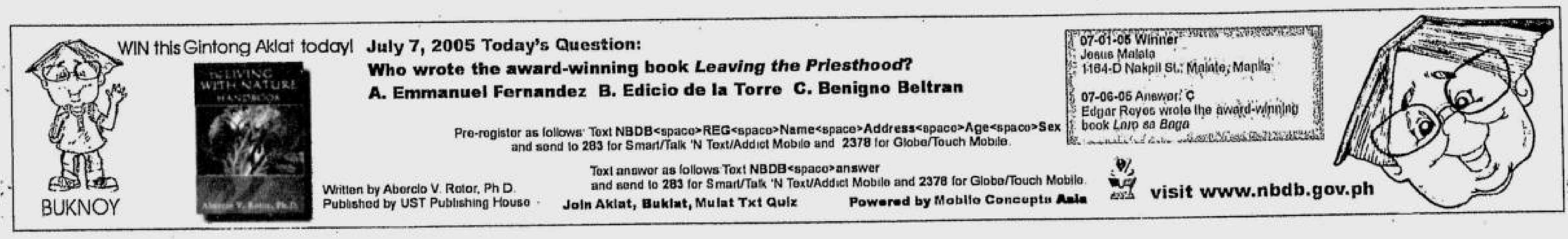
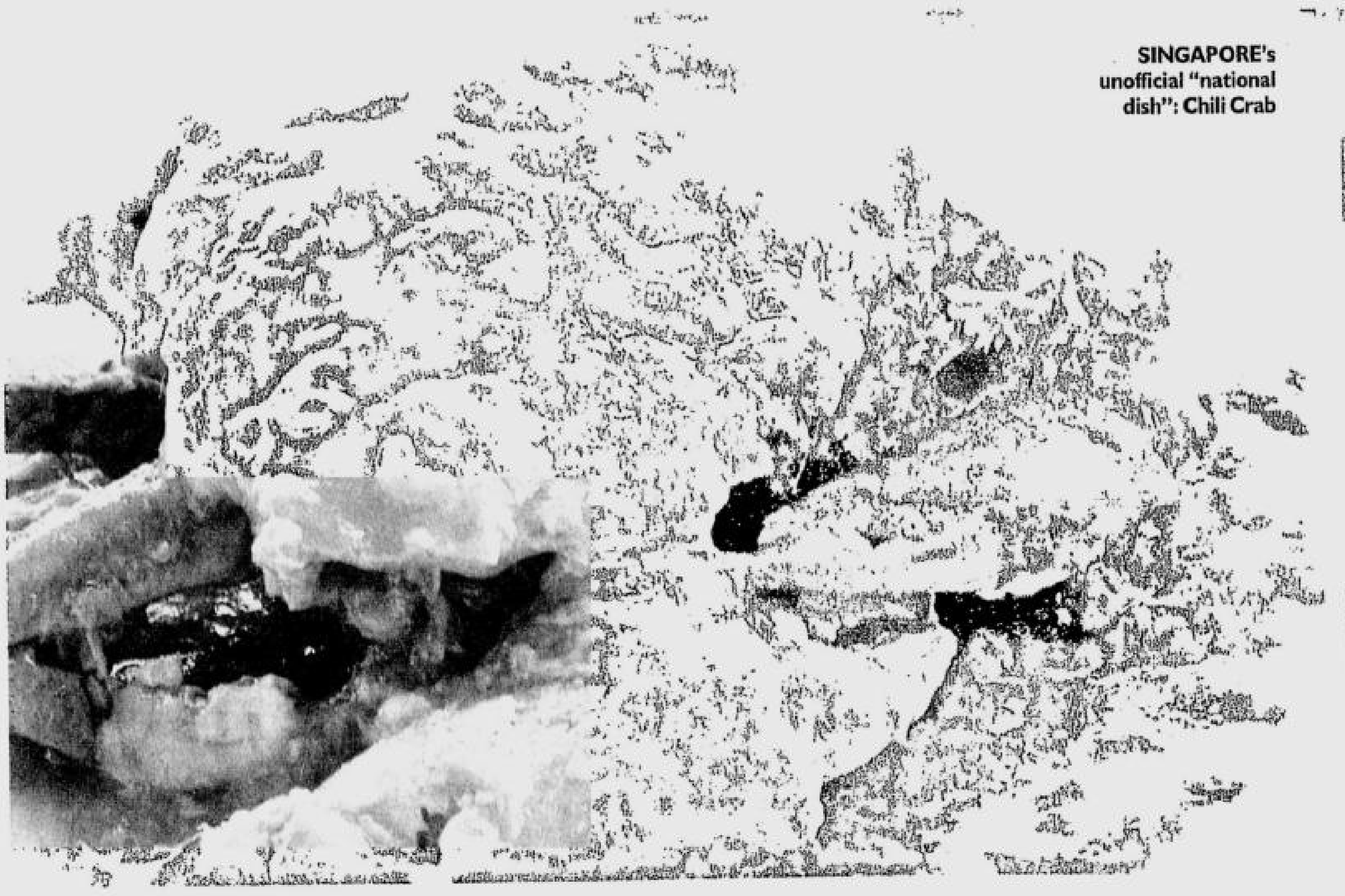
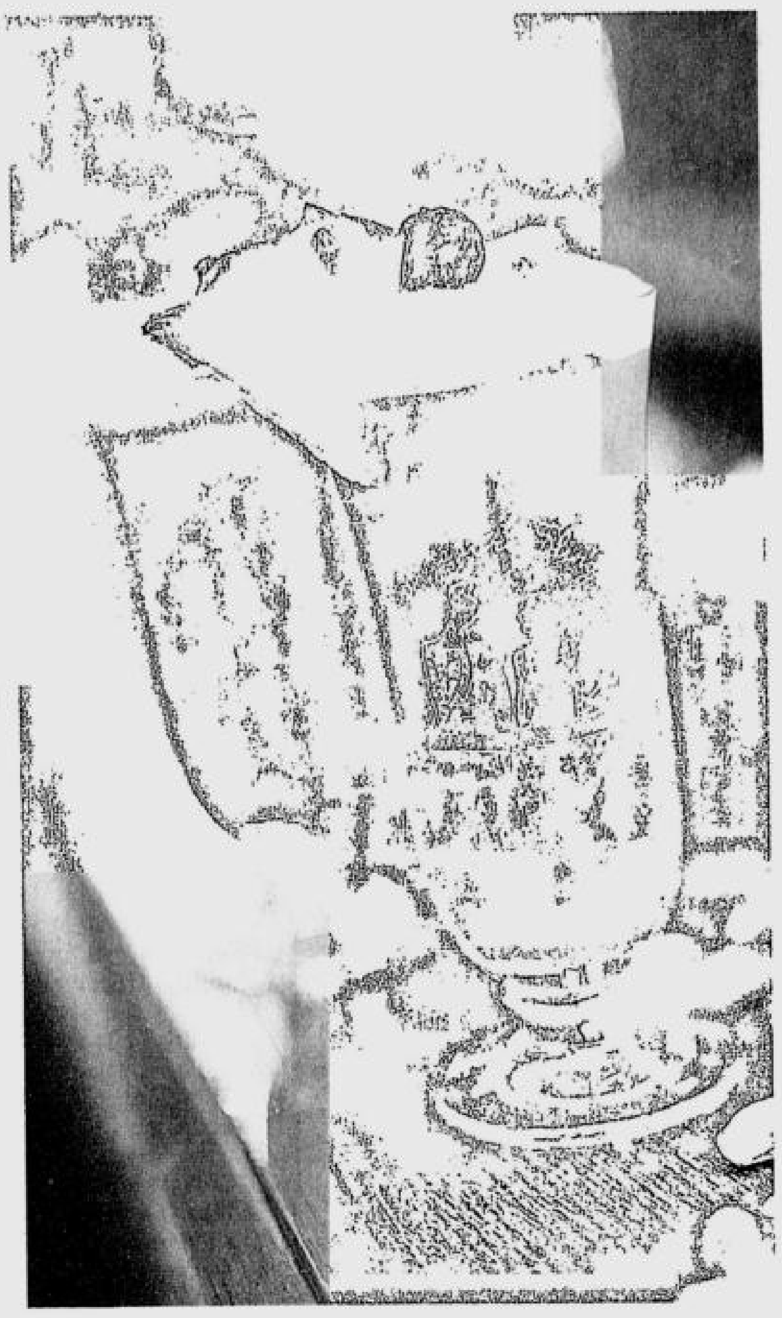


WIN this Gintong Aklat today!
BUKNOY
Written by Abercio V. Rotor, Ph D.
Published by UST Publishing House
July 7, 2005 Today's Question:
Who wrote the award-winning book *Leaving the Priesthood*?
A. Emmanuel Fernandez B. Edicio de la Torre C. Benigno Beltran
Pre-register as follows: Text NBDB<space>REG<space>Name<space>Address<space>Age<space>Sex and send to 283 for Smart/Talk 'N Text/Addict Mobile and 2378 for Globe/Touch Mobile.
Text answer as follows Text NBDB<space>answer and send to 283 for Smart/Talk 'N Text/Addict Mobile and 2378 for Globe/Touch Mobile.
Join Aklat, Buklat, Mulat Txt Quiz
Powered by Mobile Concepts Asia
07-01-05 Winner
Jesus Malala
1164-D Nakpil St., Malate, Manila
07-06-05 Answer: C
Edgar Reyes wrote the award-winning book *Lupa sa Baga*
visit www.nbdb.gov.ph



SINGAPORE's unofficial "national dish": Chili Crab



CENTURY-OLD drink Singapore Sling is still as popular as ever.

A festival for gourmets and gourmands

By Beia Formoso

GET your stomachs ready because Singapore is at it again.

The annual Singapore Food Festival promises to be fun and scrumptious for everybody, including vegetarians, kids, and non-Singaporeans.

And filling! With an event planned for practically each day of the month of July—from food trails, exhibits, culinary workshops, cookouts and cooking demonstrations to scavenger hunts—there is more than enough food and smiles to go around.

Makan Mania

Not to fret if you missed the opening celebration of the festival, the "Makan Mania of the '60s" (*makan* is the Malay word for "eat") for authentic Singaporean hawker fare can be found all year round anywhere in the island country.

However, if you wish to enjoy hawker fare in a classier and cleaner setting, the Grand Hyatt Hotel offers a buffet of Singapore street food along with Malay, Chinese and Indian cuisine in its newly opened StraitsKitchen restaurant. Here you will find everything from *tandoori* and *samosas* to roast duck to *satay*. Drinks and desserts are just as diverse with Teh Tarik (pulled tea), sugarcane juice, mango pudding, red bean soup and more. Comprised of show kitchens, chefs prepare dishes on the spot—a guarantee that food is fresh and hot.

Tomorrow (July 8), a "Deep Sea Medley" of Singaporean seafood commences at the East Coast Seafood Centre where most of the seafood restaurants are located. But the one thing the Gold Coast Seafood restaurant, located in Hotel Grand Central on Orchard Road, serves well is Singapore's unofficial "national dish": Chili Crab.

A truly made-in-Singapore dish created decades ago by local chefs, Chili Crab's savory secret is in the sauce, composed of fresh red chilies, garlic, ginger, tomato ketchup mixed with cornstarch, eggs and soya bean paste. A messy treat but well worth it.

Black Pepper Chili Crab is another local favorite. Crab is smothered in a thick, fragrant, spicy black sauce consisting of black pepper, chilies, butter and Chinese dark sauces.

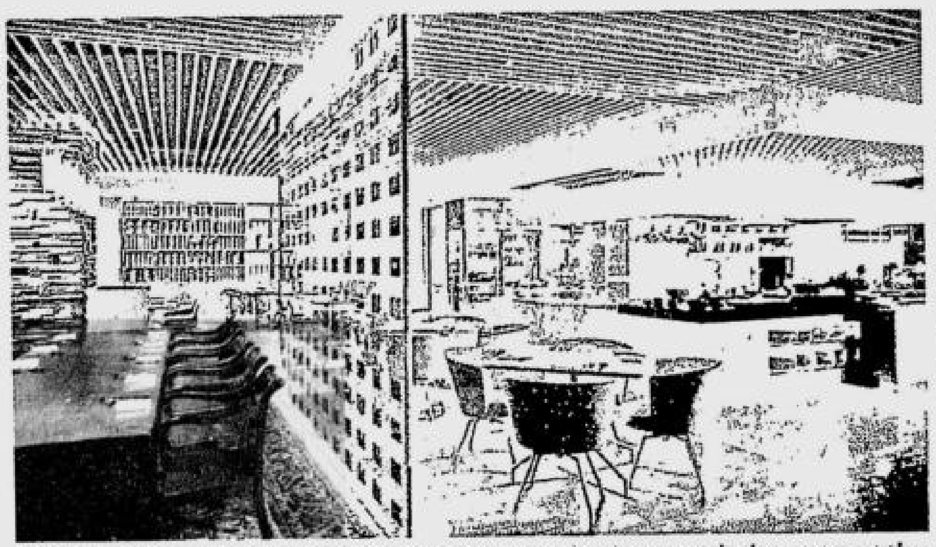
Both the Chili Crab and Black Pepper Crab are on "Singapore's Ten Must-Tries" list that also includes Satay, Bak Kut Teh, Carrot Cake, Char Kway Teow, Curry Fish Head, Hainanese Chicken Rice, Rojak and Roti Prata.

Drink, Singapore style

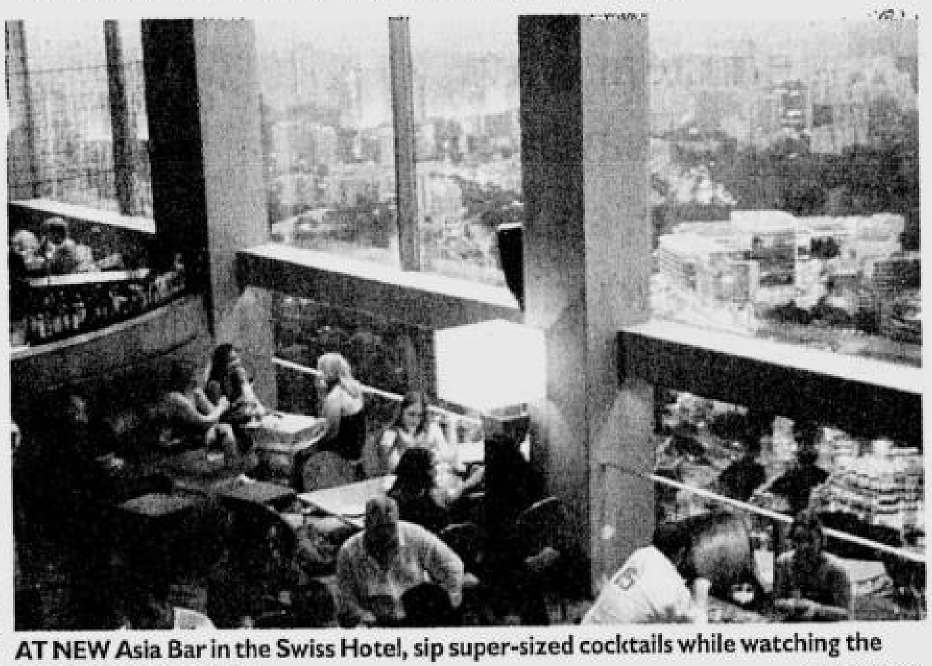
Despite their reputation for being a little uptight, Singaporeans know how to drink and have a good time. The Long Bar at Raffles Hotel serves the infamous Singapore Sling, a fruity, tangy alcoholic concoction that is as popular as ever since its creation in the early 1900s by a Hainanese-Chinese bartender.

The drink complements the energetic mood set by the live band that plays old rock 'n roll hits. The bar itself is interesting with rows of *paypay* swaying on the ceiling that keep the crowds cool, and the nutshells that pile up on the floor as drinkers snack.

Most foreigners end a day of sight-seeing at the New Asia Bar on the 70th floor of the Swiss Hotel for a fantastic view of the city. Here you can watch the sunset as you sip super-sized cocktails or "mocktails," then dance the night away when the lights dim after nine.



LIVE chefs prepare anything Singaporean from *tandoori* to roast duck to satay at the new StraitsKitchen buffet restaurant in the Grand Hyatt Hotel.



AT NEW Asia Bar in the Swiss Hotel, sip super-sized cocktails while watching the sun set over Singapore.

BEIA FORMOSO

A night of partying calls for a good breakfast the morning after. For Singaporeans, Kaya toast is the popular breakfast fare. A sweet jam made from eggs, flour, sugar, coconut and *pandan* (which gives it its greenish color) is spread generously over toasted bread, which is best eaten with a half-boiled egg and coffee or tea.

Lines are usually long (but move fast) during mornings at Ah Mei Kaya Toast at Banquet Clifford Centre, a testament to how delicious the item is, not to mention its affordability at only S$2 per meal.

In the afternoon, Ice Milk Tea, made from young tea leaves that are freshly brewed and blended with special milk powder, provides relief from the Singapore heat while Kayachang or sticky rice cooked with *pandan* leaves and coconut also served with Kaya is a delightful snack.

BREAKFAST all day: Ice Milk Tea, Kayachang, Kaya Toast, and a half-boiled egg drizzled with soy sauce

BEIA FORMOSO

Snacking away

Snacking is forgivable, especially when the food is as warm and filling as curry puffs. Andrew Johnson of the SpiceTree on Geylang Road specializes in the pastry. The recipe, he says, has been passed on to him by parents and grandparents from India. Now he teaches his passion to Singaporean kids through summer workshops.

Curry puffs have evolved over the last 60 years from the original chicken curry to mango, cheese, apple, *durian*—just some of the 20 flavors Johnson has invented.

CURRY puffs come in 20 flavors, including mango custard, mushroom and cheese, mushroom and egg, and chicken curry.

BEIA FORMOSO

When it gets too hot, go for the new ice cream concoctions created by Häagen-Dazs, the official super premium ice cream sponsor of the Singapore Food Festival. Singaporeans are so crazy over the smelly *durian* that Häagen-Dazs came up with the unique "Durian Divine," vanilla ice cream infused with a purée made from the finest grade of *durian*, coated with white chocolate and almonds.

Perhaps the most refreshing cocktail drink ever invented is the "Pacific Paradise," a glorious harmony of lemon sorbet, blue curaçao and soda water. "Singapura Ice" is similar to *halo-halo* with fruit added.

For a simpler treat, there is the newest ice cream flavor, Custard Pudding, that tastes like *leche flan*. What tops the lot, though, is the Ice Cream Fondue, frozen balls of strawberry, chocolate chip, macadamia nut and coffee ice cream in a warm chocolate sauce.

HÄAGEN-DAZS' Pacific Paradise is the most refreshing cocktail drink ever invented.

Safari dining

The Night Safari at the Singapore Zoo is an award-winning attraction. Visitors observe animals in their natural environment during the time of day when they are most active. Now there's an even better way to enjoy the Night Safari and that's the Gourmet Safari Express, a fine-dining excursion through the scenic park.

The evening begins with a cocktail reception then dinner by candlelight on a decorated tram that takes you into the rainforests and jungles for a close encounter with exotic animals. Later, be prepared for a guided walk through the Leopard Trail and newly opened Giant Flying Squirrel Exhibit then back to the tram for dessert.

Good food, wildlife and nature come together under starry night sky in a tropical rainforest filled with the sounds of wild animals. Romantic for couples and fun and educational for whole families, the Gourmet Safari Express is truly an unforgettable, unique dining experience.

GOURMET Safari Express at the Night Safari in the Singapore Zoo combines fine-dining, wildlife and nature in a unique dining experience.

Vegetarian delight

On the fourth weekend of July, a Vegetarian and Fruits Jamboree takes place. Local chefs will whip up vegetarian versions of uniquely Singaporean dishes and Häagen-Dazs offers fruit-and-vegetable-themed desserts. The Health Promotion Board is also organizing a Healthy Cooking contest where everyone is invited to submit recipes for dishes with veggies and fruits as main ingredients.

The festival ends with Foodventure for Kids, a food adventure theme park for families that promises to inform and entertain the young and old with a castle made of bread, a sugar-and-spice train filled with candy and ice cream, and a vegi-maze where kids will learn about organic farming.

Call the Singapore Tourism Board-Philippines at (02)8130946 or e-mail stbphils@pacific.net.ph.

Singapore Airlines flies 3 times daily from Manila to Singapore.